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A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO THE ANCIENT OLYMPICS

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POTSDAM AND YALTA
HOW THE 'BIG THREE' SHAPED THE FUTURE OF POST-WAR EUROPE

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

THE COMPLETE STORY

Marc Morris answers the key questions about 1066

Sergeant Stubby
The courageous canine who became a WWI American hero

Queen of the waves
How Gertrude Ederle swam her way into the record books

History in colour: The long war

PLUS Q&A: Is Caesar salad named after Julius Caesar? What was a tosher? And more ...

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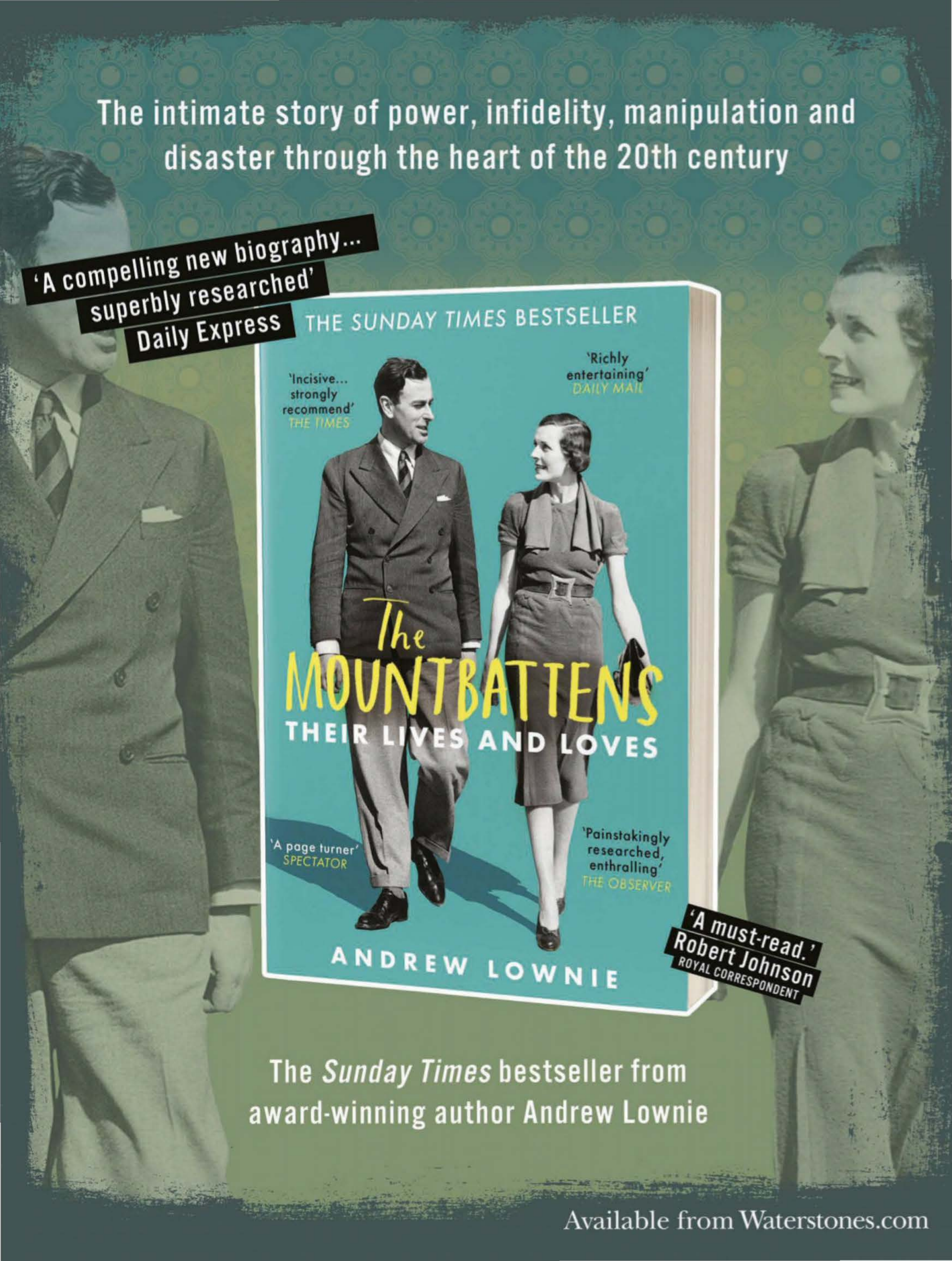

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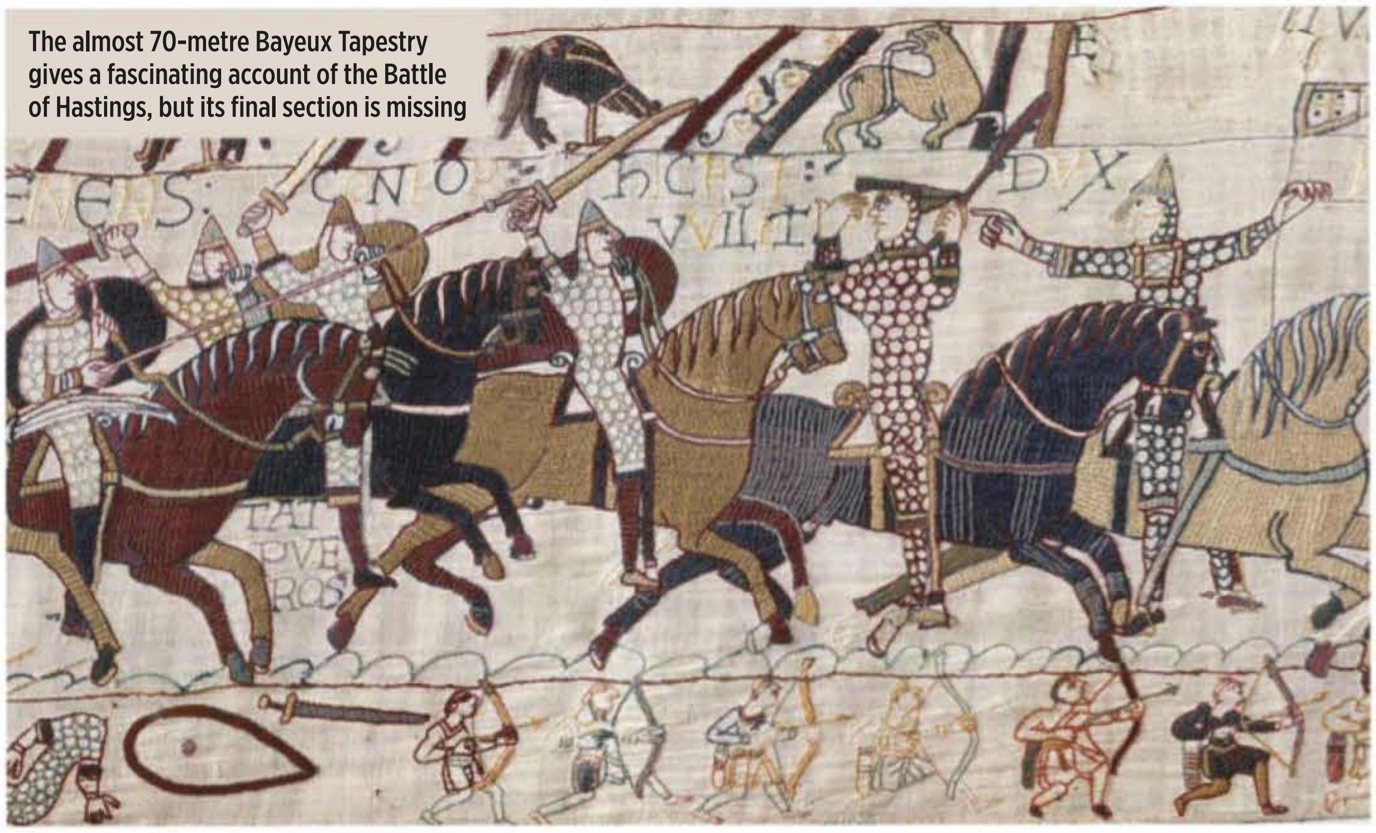
The almost 70-metre Bayeux Tapestry gives a fascinating account of the Battle of Hastings, but its final section is missing

The Norman Conquest of 1066 is one of the most well-known dates in English history, an event that reshaped the fabric of English politics, society and language. But just who were the Normans, and how did they come to invade England in the first place? It's a question answered by historian Marc Morris in this month's cover feature, which presents (probably!) **everything you could ever want to know about the Norman Conquest** – from the Battle of Hastings, to the Bayeux Tapestry. Turn to page 26 to read more.

This summer should have seen the world's top athletes head to Tokyo, Japan, for the 32nd modern Olympic Games. The Games have been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, but we're still getting into the Olympic spirit with **a visitor's guide to the Ancient Greek Olympics of 436 BC.** Discover where to stay, who to watch and how to avoid any potential pitfalls from page 41.

Elsewhere, we explore the Potsdam and Yalta conferences of 1945, which saw **leaders from Britain, the US and USSR shape the future of post-war Europe** (*page 20*); discuss how America might have looked had US President Abraham Lincoln lived longer (*page 68*); examine the life of Protestant reformer Martin Luther (*page 38*); and meet **Sergeant Stubby, America's most famous canine hero** (*page 48*). We also examine the incredible talent and tenacity of Gertrude Ederle, who, in 1926, became **the first woman to swim the English Channel** (*page 52*).

Lockdown is slowly lifting for many people, but if you are still unable to leave home, **don't forget, our subscription deals offer free UK delivery, right to your door**, so you don't have to miss out on a single issue of *BBC History Revealed*. Turn to page 24 for more details.

In the meantime, wherever you are, stay safe.

Charlotte Hodgman
Editor

Charlotte

THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

100
The number of oxen sacrificed to Zeus at the 436 BC Olympic Games.

17
The number of battles that American war dog Sergeant Stubby was present for in WWI.

626
The number of human figures depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry.

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How the law student-turned-theologian angered the pope and kickstarted the Reformation – and how he lost control of it

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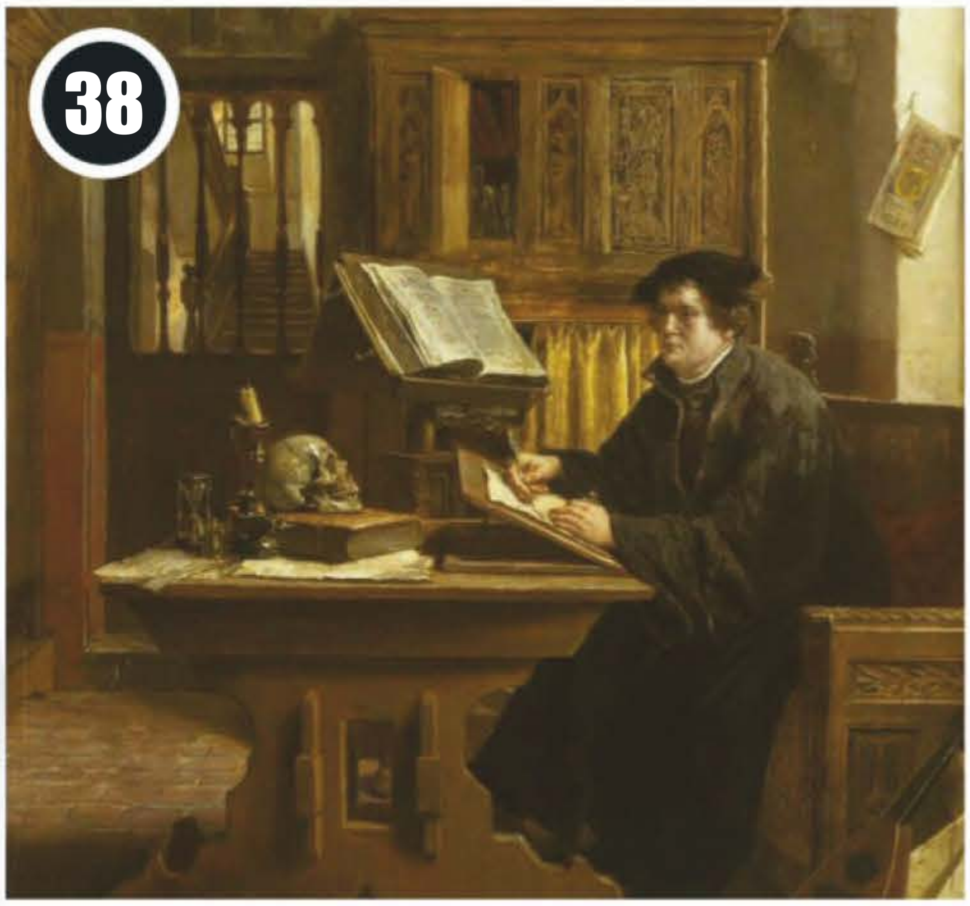
COVER FEATURE

▲ How much of the Bayeux Tapestry can we treat as historic fact?



▲ In challenging the Catholic Church, Martin Luther found himself at odds with the most powerful institution in Europe

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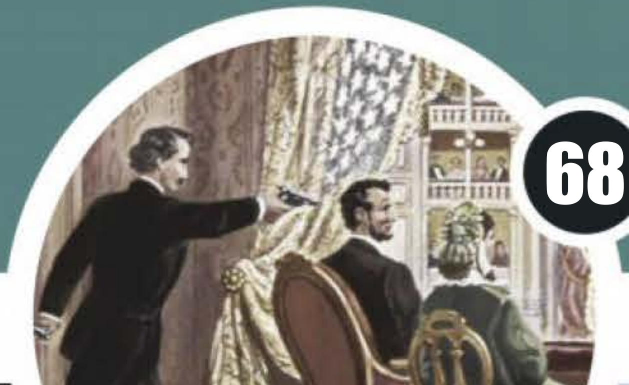
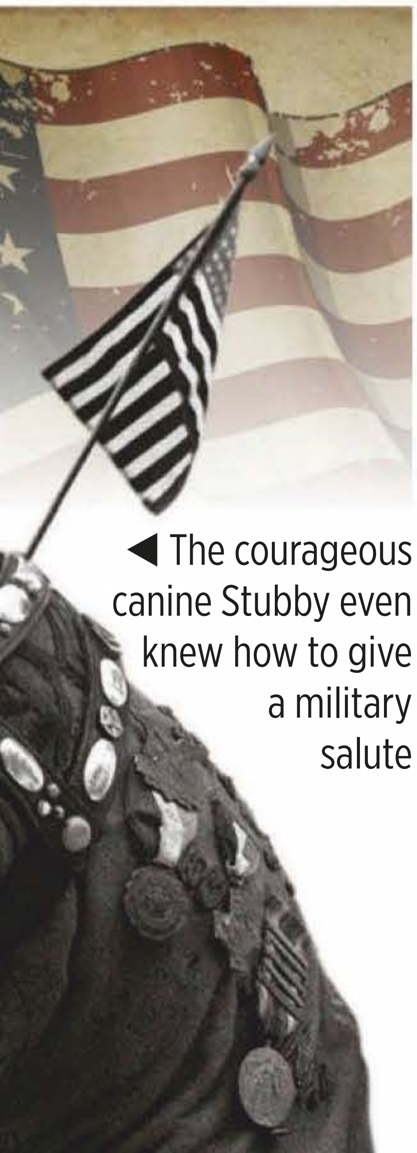


◀ If Abraham Lincoln hadn't been shot, would he still have the formidable reputation he has today?

▲ 'Queen of Waves' Gertrude Ederle wore a specially designed swimsuit – barely visible beneath the layers of oil and grease

▲ German troops face wintry conditions during the invasion of Norway in April 1940 in this newly colourised image



◀ The courageous canine Stubby even knew how to give a military salute

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A literal cash cow and a diaper derby

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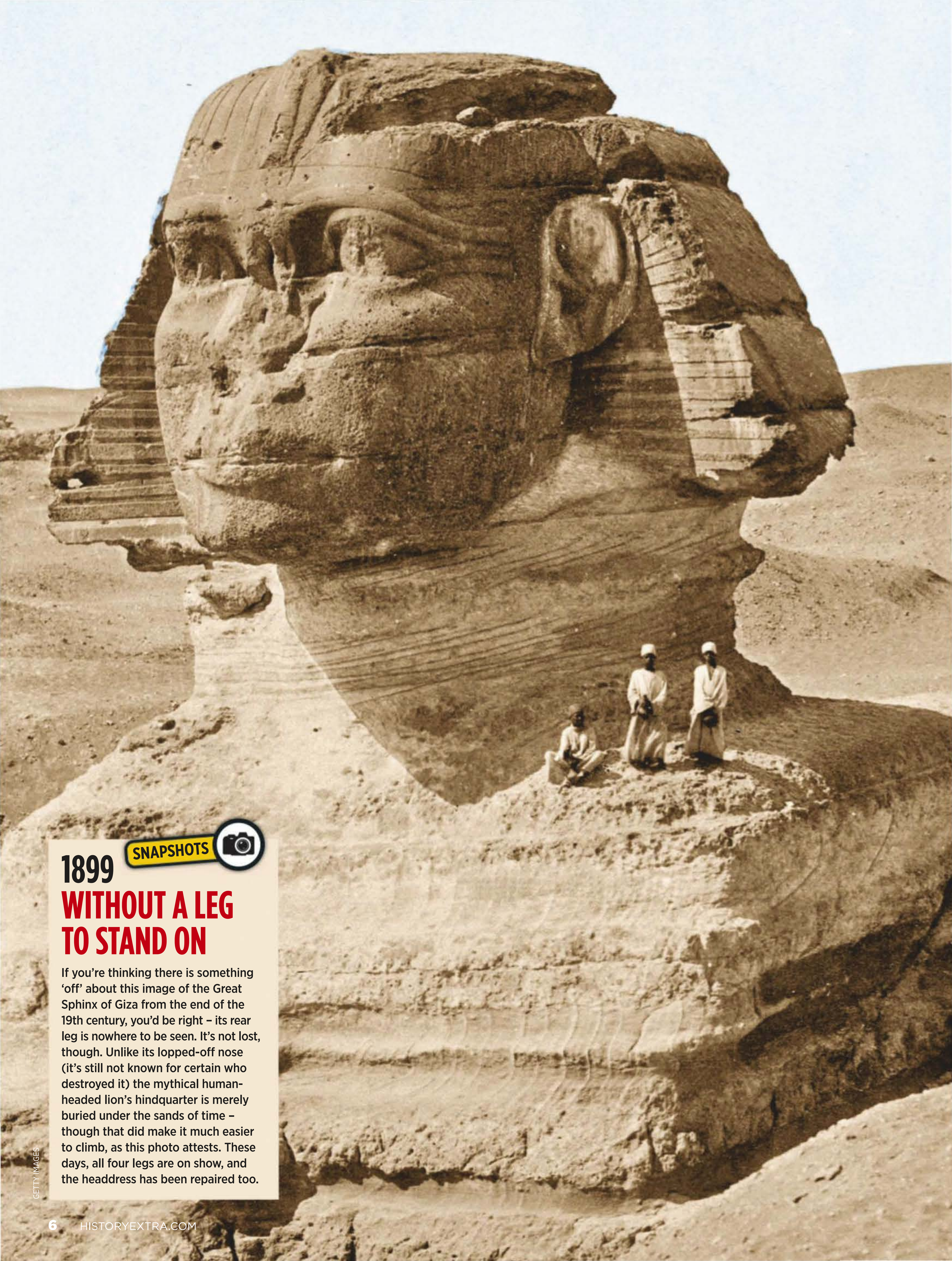


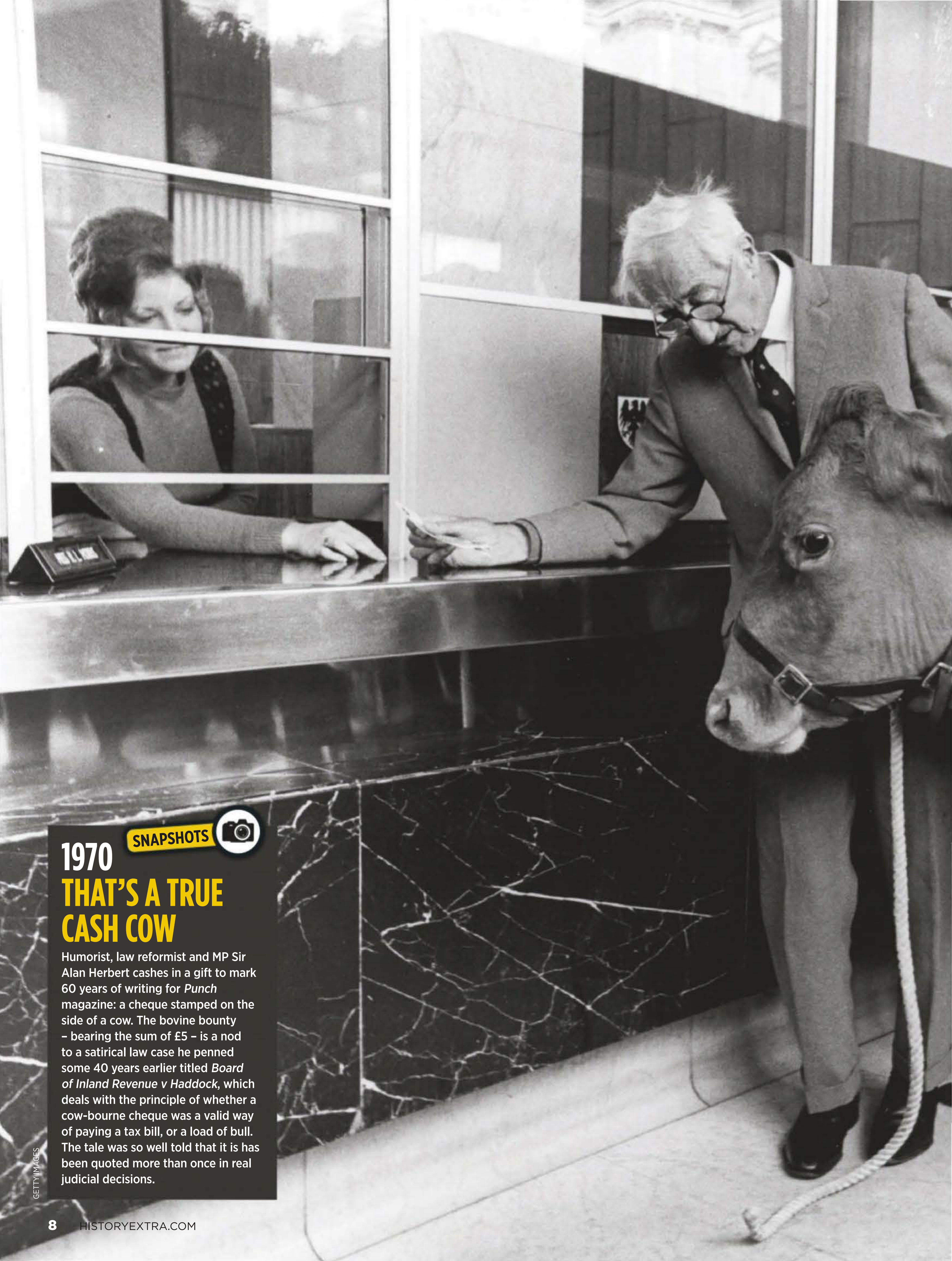
SNAPSHOTS

1899

WITHOUT A LEG TO STAND ON

If you're thinking there is something 'off' about this image of the Great Sphinx of Giza from the end of the 19th century, you'd be right – its rear leg is nowhere to be seen. It's not lost, though. Unlike its lopped-off nose (it's still not known for certain who destroyed it) the mythical human-headed lion's hindquarter is merely buried under the sands of time – though that did make it much easier to climb, as this photo attests. These days, all four legs are on show, and the headdress has been repaired too.

GETTY IMAGES



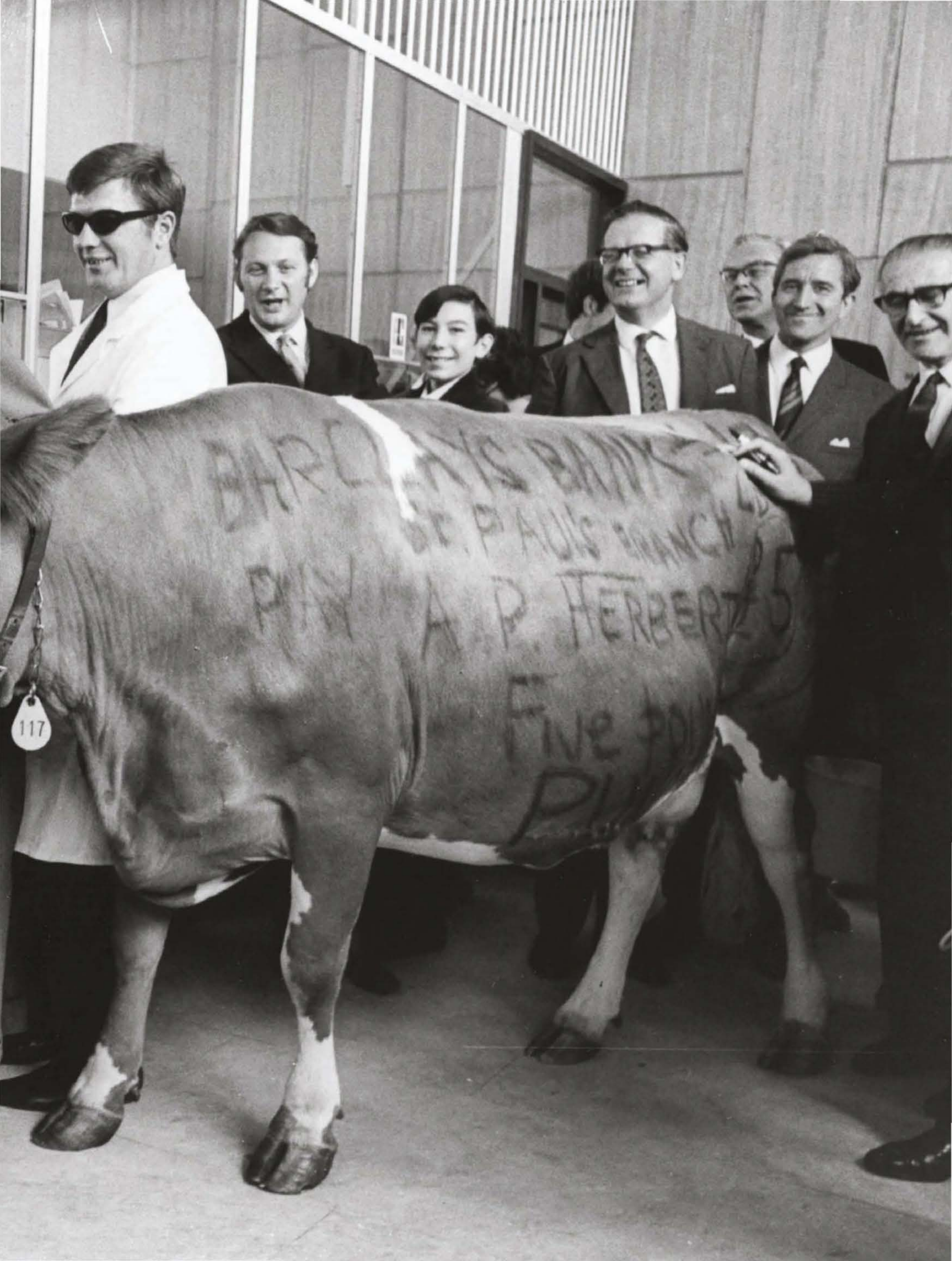
SNAPSHOTS

1970

THAT'S A TRUE CASH COW

Humorist, law reformist and MP Sir Alan Herbert cashes in a gift to mark 60 years of writing for *Punch* magazine: a cheque stamped on the side of a cow. The bovine bounty – bearing the sum of £5 – is a nod to a satirical law case he penned some 40 years earlier titled *Board of Inland Revenue v Haddock*, which deals with the principle of whether a cow-bourne cheque was a valid way of paying a tax bill, or a load of bull. The tale was so well told that it is has been quoted more than once in real judicial decisions.

GETTY IMAGES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NEW JERSEY FAIR ENTRY
SLINKY TOY STAR
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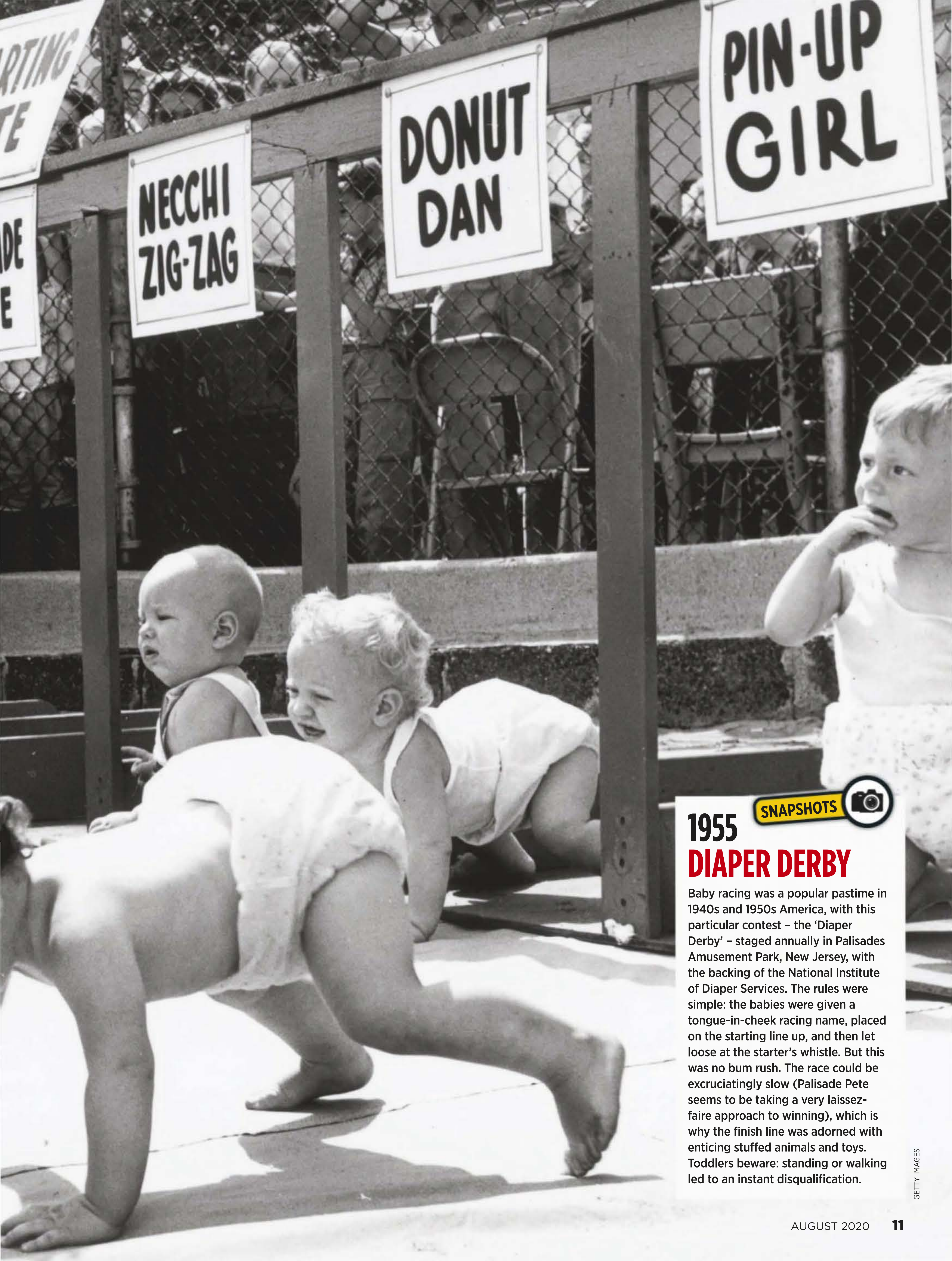
PET



SNAPSHOTS

1955

DIAPER DERBY

Baby racing was a popular pastime in 1940s and 1950s America, with this particular contest – the 'Diaper Derby' – staged annually in Palisades Amusement Park, New Jersey, with the backing of the National Institute of Diaper Services. The rules were simple: the babies were given a tongue-in-cheek racing name, placed on the starting line up, and then let loose at the starter's whistle. But this was no bum rush. The race could be excruciatingly slow (Palisade Pete seems to be taking a very laissez-faire approach to winning), which is why the finish line was adorned with enticing stuffed animals and toys. Toddlers beware: standing or walking led to an instant disqualification.

GETTY IMAGES

THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH....

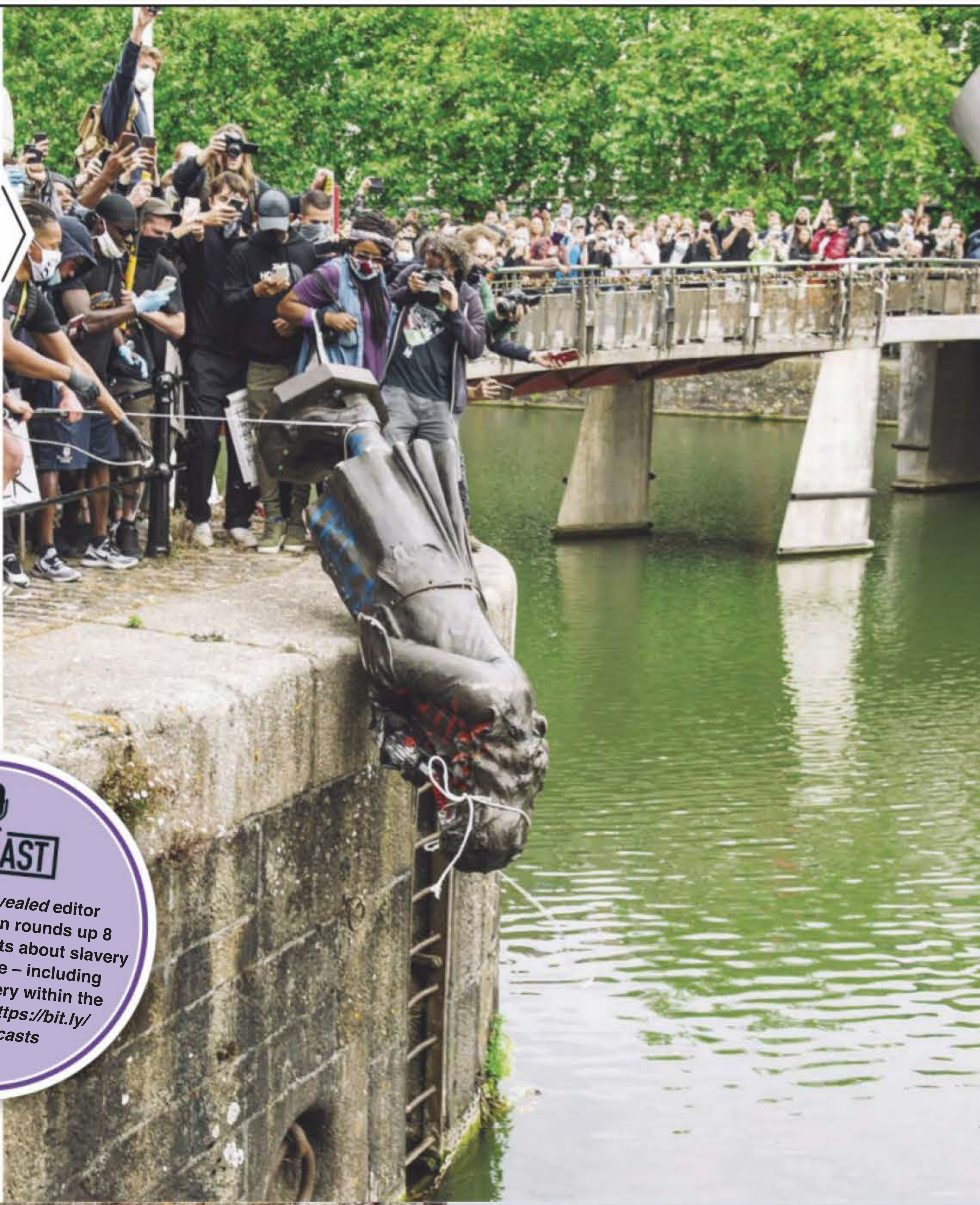
RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

EDWARD COLSTON'S TOPPLING PUTS STATUES UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

On 7 June, during a Black Lives Matter protest, the statue of Bristol-born slave trader Edward Colston (1636–1721) was pulled from its plinth in the city's centre and dumped into Bristol Harbour, bringing Britain's historic role in the transatlantic slave trade under scrutiny and prompting vigorous debates about the kinds of figures that are venerated through statues in public spaces.

Colston is a name writ large across Bristol, in a literal sense, as his name graces a tower block, a school and several streets to name a few. It's also a divisive one. His statue was erected in 1895 (more than 100 years after his death) on account of the huge sums he gifted to the city, but that money came from a fortune built on the slave trade. At the time of its demise, campaigns to remove the statue, or at the very least add a plaque acknowledging Colston's part in the trafficking of enslaved people, had been rumbling on for years.

Bristol's city council retrieved Colston's statue from its submerged sojourn four days later. It's now in storage; its plinth empty. But since its toppling, in Britain and around the world, other historical figures have also come under the spotlight, and in some cases their statues vandalised or removed by protestors on both sides of the argument. They include prime minister Winston Churchill, Admiral Horatio Nelson, explorers Christopher Columbus and James Cook, scouts founder Robert Baden-Powell, Belgian king Leopold II and US president Theodore Roosevelt.



PODCAST

BBC History Revealed editor Charlotte Hodgman rounds up 8 HistoryExtra podcasts about slavery and the slave trade – including the history of slavery within the British empire: *https://bit.ly/SlaveryPodcasts*

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE WHEN IT COMES TO THE FABLED RED LION PLAYHOUSE

The Red Lion, the Elizabethan-era playhouse built in c1567 and perhaps London's earliest purpose-built theatre, may have been discovered in Whitechapel. Archaeology South East discovered an unusual timber structure at the site measuring 12.27 metres by 9.27 metres, which coincides with the details of the stage described at the Red Lion in two lawsuits. The site was a short-lived but important progenitor to The Theatre, which offered the first permanent home for acting troupes and staged a young Shakespeare's plays in 1590.

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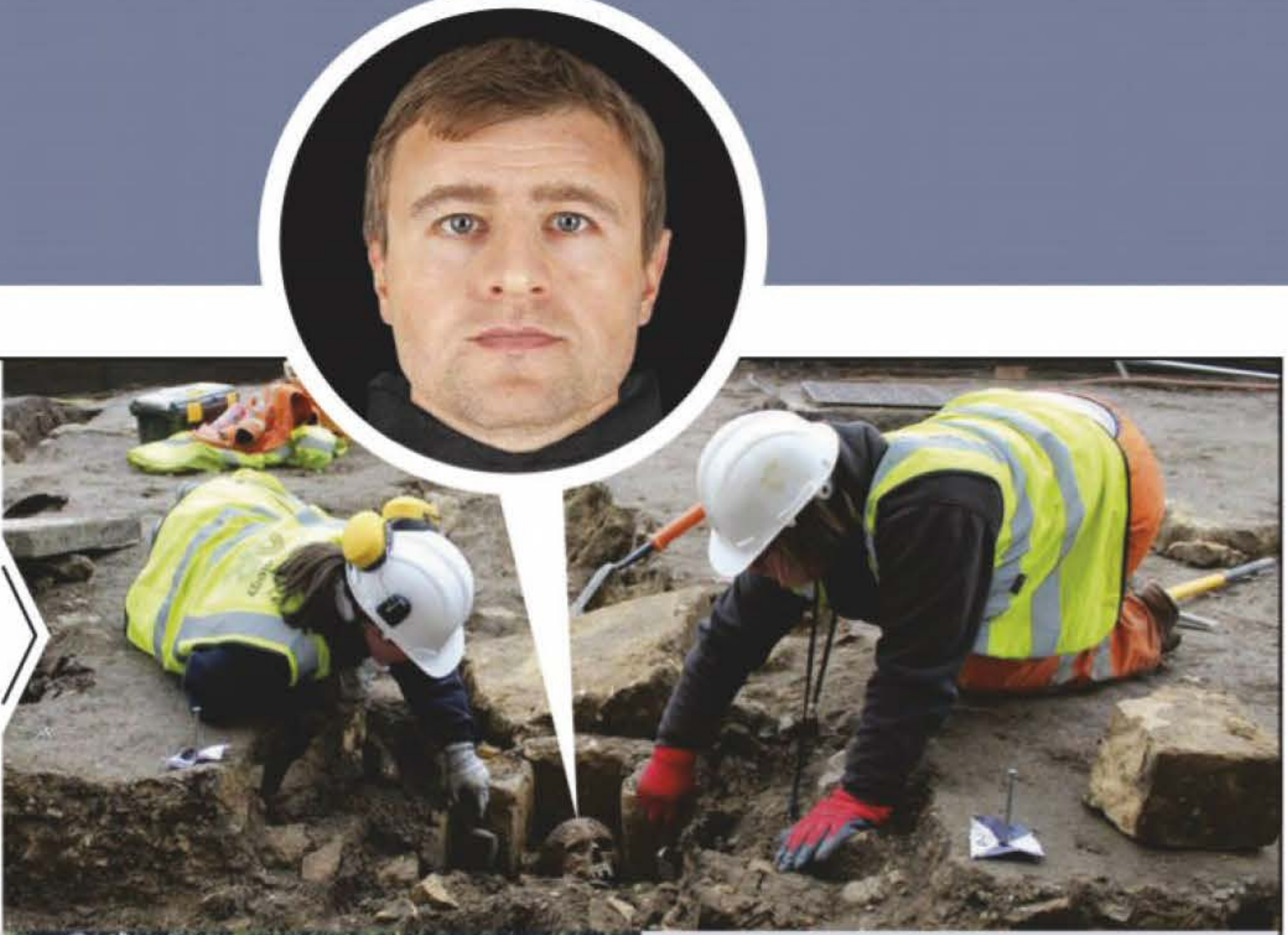


EVER WONDERED WHAT A MEDIEVAL PRIEST LOOKED LIKE? HERE'S OUR BEST GUESS

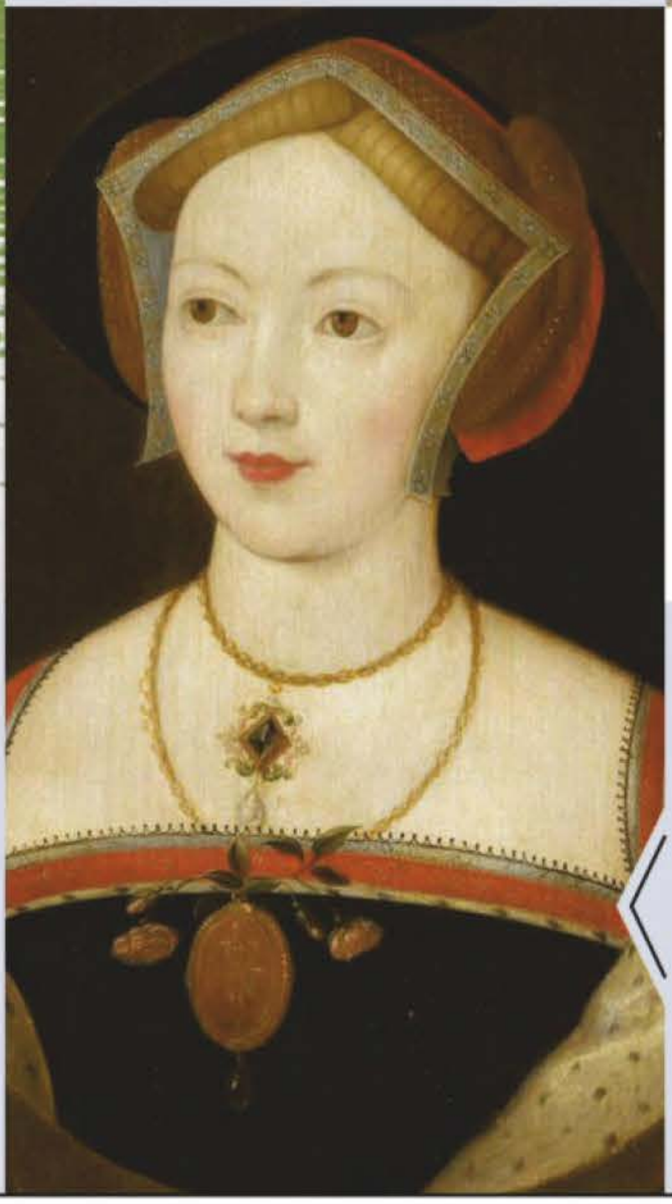
This ordinary looking chap may be what a medieval priest buried at Lincoln Cathedral in the Middle Ages looked like though experts stress that it is a best guess. The priest, who was approximately 169cm tall and is thought to have died in his late thirties, was one of 50 burials excavated in January, and was noted at the time as a "rare find". This image was crafted by forensic artist Hew Morrison from photos of the skull and archaeological findings. Structural features are accurate, but the colour of his eyes and hair are conjecture.

11

The age by which Dame Vera Lynn had quit school to dance and sing full time. Lynn, the 'Forces' Sweetheart' whose song 'We'll meet again' became intrinsically linked to WWII, died on 18 June aged 103

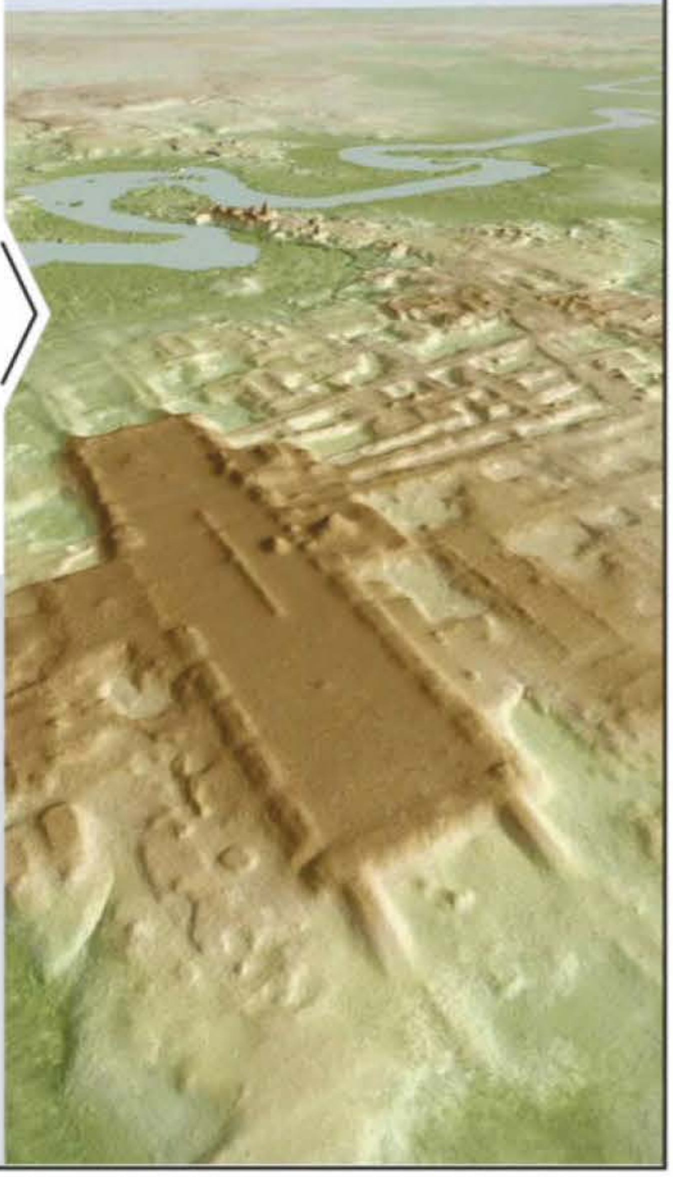
DROUGHTS ARE HELPING TO TELL THE STORY OF ROMAN-ERA WALES

Aerial photos taking during droughts in 2018 are continuing to reveal how the Roman military machine advanced into Wales. Around 200 ancient sites including roads, forts and villas have been pinpointed through scorched crop marks. Among the finds was a new 'marching camp' only the third found in southeast Wales which would have been cleared as the Roman Army advanced. "They are the temporary overnight stops that the Romans build on manoeuvres in hostile territory," researcher Dr Toby Driver explains.



THE LARGEST MAYAN STRUCTURE IS BIGGER THAN EGYPT'S LARGEST PYRAMID

A huge Mayan structure at least 3,000 years old has been discovered amongst the rural ranches of Tabasco state, Mexico. Aguada Fénix is a colossal, raised rectangular platform some 1,400 metres long and 15 metres high which, by volume, makes it bigger than the Great Pyramid of Giza. Thought to be a ceremonial site where processions and rituals were held, it is both the largest and oldest Mayan structure ever identified. Of note is the lack of sculptures celebrating Mayan elites, which could imply Mayan society had less inequality at this time.



TREE SCIENCE SOLVES PORTRAIT MYSTERY

The sitter of this painting, which has been in Royal Collection for centuries and currently hangs in Holyrood Palace, has been identified at last: it's Mary Boleyn, Henry VIII's mistress and sister to his second queen, Anne. With the title of the painting 'Portrait of a Woman' offering no clues, it fell to dendrochronology (tree ring dating) to solve the mystery. By examining the painting's wooden panel, researchers from the Jordaens Van Dyck Panel Paintings Project were able to link it to a set of paintings that hung at Windsor Castle 300 years ago. Read more about the project at *jordaensvandyck.org*.

ABOVE: **Members of the Sealed Knot's cavalry brandish smoking pistols at Charlton Park, Malmesbury**

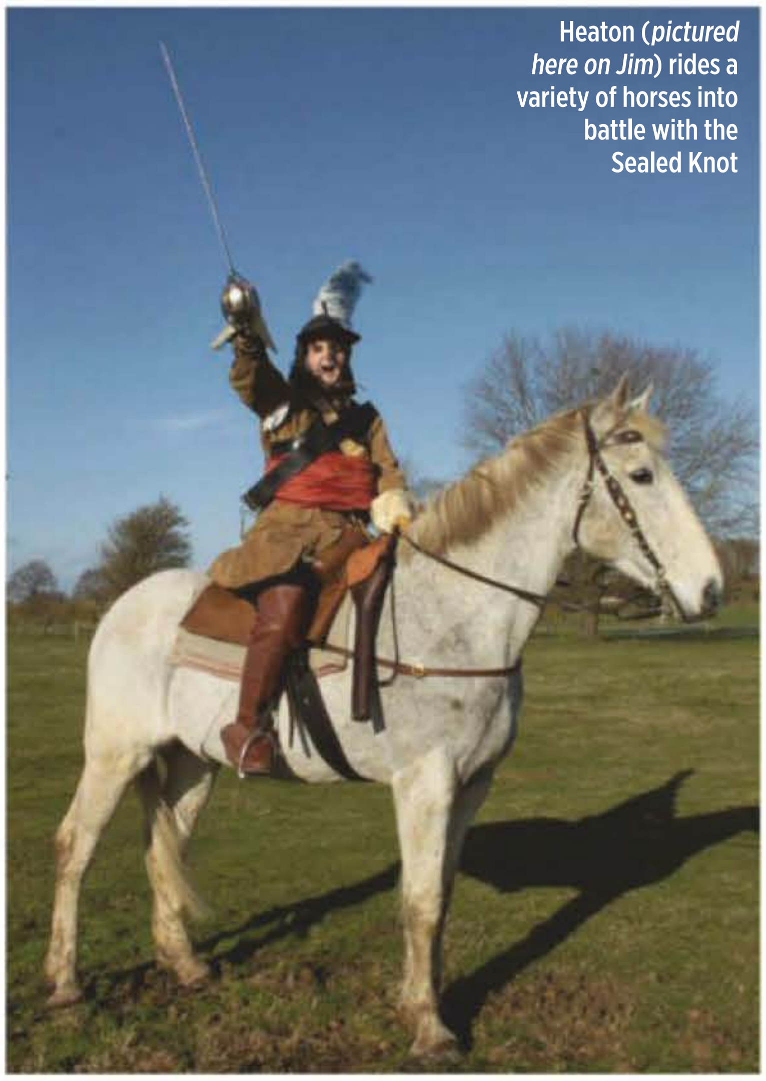
RIGHT: **A woman takes part in the Sealed Knot's re-enactment of the 1644 Battle of Nantwich**

FAR RIGHT: **Members of the Sealed Knot bring battle to life with cavalry charges and cannon fire**

JIM THE HORSE SUPPLIED BY EQUISTRY, ALAMY X3

Cavalry trooper re-enactor in the Sealed Knot

Harriet Heaton (Wallers Cavalry, Parliamentarian army)



Heaton (*pictured here on Jim*) rides a variety of horses into battle with the Sealed Knot

WHAT IS THE SEALED KNOT AND HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED?
The Sealed Knot is Britain's largest and oldest historical re-enactment society; we recreate the conflicts and battles of the British Civil Wars. I joined because my boyfriend was a member, and he asked me whether I would give it a go. I went to the August bank holiday muster in 2017 so that I could see what it was all about.

WHY DID YOU PICK YOUR ROLE?
When I initially joined, I went on the field as a water carrier. They're really important as they ensure people have access to water and stay hydrated – it can be really hot in the summer. But I wanted more of an active role, so I enquired about joining the cavalry. I've been riding horses since I was six years old, but I could never do the 'traditional' competing or other equitation as I don't have my own horse. I was asked if I could ride and whether I would feel comfortable getting on any horse (which I was), and so I became part of the Wallers Cavalry.

DID YOU HAVE TO UNDERTAKE ANY SPECIALIST TRAINING TO BE PART OF THE CAVALRY?
Due to the nature of working with horses, we do have to train outside of the season. There are some really important skills you need when riding in the Sealed Knot. Firstly, you have to be comfortable riding with one hand and neck reining [holding the reins in one hand rather than two, meaning the rider has less direct control over their mount], as you're holding a sword in your other hand. Having never played polo, this was a new skill for me to pick up, and I'm still learning how to neck rein in the most effective way.

We also have to complete sword training to ensure that we're using the weapons safely. Even though re-enactment swords are blunted, they're still heavy pieces of equipment. We have to be very aware of where we are holding them and how we use them so that the horses and other members of the cavalry, as well as the infantry on the ground, are safe.

As you might expect, your riding level also has to be up to scratch. Having good balance is essential, as well as being able to control the horse you are given.

We can take a musket or firearms test in the Sealed Knot, too. This requires a firearms licence as cavalry can shoot pistols from the saddle, but I don't have the licence to do this yet.

> "Riding horses in battles where there are flags, explosions and infantrymen running around poses the obvious risk of falling off"

HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANY INJURIES?
No, not really. I've had the occasional bruise on my knee from a melee, but nothing serious. Riding horses in battles where there are lots of moving parts including flags, explosions and infantrymen running around poses the obvious risk of falling off, but it's no more dangerous than cross country riding. You judge the horse you're on and if, for example, they feel quite fiery, then you might hold back in the charges to retain control over your mount. But that's part of the skill of riding: priority number one is keeping you, the horse and all the infantry on the ground safe.

IF YOU COULD RE-ENACT A BATTLE FROM ANY OTHER PERIOD OF HISTORY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
I'd love to see more riders taking part in battles where historically the cavalry played a greater part, so that the public can better understand the contribution and significance of horses in history. In my opinion, there really is nothing more exciting than cantering in drill formation think of Rohan's cavalry charges in *The Lord of the Rings*!

ARE THERE MANY WOMEN IN THE SEALED KNOT?
There are quite a lot of women in the Knot. Both my current and previous commanding officers have been women, and their role required them to take charge of the Parliamentarian cavalry. There are also plenty of other women who are on the field as pikemen, musketeers and water carriers, and they're equally promoted to senior roles. ⊙

HARRIET HEATON **is a cavalry trooper in the Sealed Knot. She rides with the Wallers Cavalry, which is part of the Parliamentarian army.**
thesealedknot.org.uk

ANNE FRANK WRITES HER LAST DIARY ENTRY

ABOVE: **The cloth-covered diary that Anne Frank received for her 13th birthday**

MAIN: **Anne was still a schoolgirl when she went into hiding with her family**

Hidden in a secret annexe, Anne Frank hunches over her diary, the slight scratching of her pen barely breaking the room's oppressive stillness. It's the first day of August in 1944, and as Anne adds another entry to her diary – a battered school exercise jotter, the third notebook that she's filled with her innermost thoughts – she cannot know these written words will be her last.

Three days later, the eight inhabitants of the annexe – Anne, her parents Otto and Edith, her sister Margot, and the van Pels family and family friend Fritz Pfeffer – were arrested by members of the Gestapo. They had been given up by an anonymous source. Anne was sent to various concentration camps, ultimately finding herself at Bergen-Belsen, where she and her sister succumbed to typhus. Anne was just 15 when she died.

The Frank family went into hiding in July 1942, but had already upturned their lives once before to escape persecution, when they relocated from the increasingly anti-Semitic Germany to Amsterdam in the early 1930s. Anne was only four at the time. Their new home did not stay safe for long, though: in 1940, Nazi Germany occupied the Netherlands. Anne (along with Amsterdam's other Jewish children) was barred from the city's public schools and forced to wear a yellow star on her clothes.

However, there was one small comfort in the face of the encroaching darkness: on her 13th birthday, Anne received a diary. Covered with white and red checked cloth, it fastened with a small lock. This birthday, on 12 June 1942, was the last before she and her family went into hiding. Edith baked biscuits for Anne to share with her friends at school, and a party was also thrown in Anne's honour, complete with a strawberry pie and a room decorated with flowers.

> "Anne devoted pages of her diary to describing the tension that crackled between the annex's inhabitants"

The teenager soon set about filling the pages of her treasured birthday gift, and her first entries reflected her family's precarious circumstances, describing the segregation and discrimination they were experiencing.

Daily life grew increasingly fraught for Jews, with the imposition of ever more restrictions. When Margot received a call-up for a German work camp, it was the final straw: the family went into hiding on 6 July 1942. Their refuge was a secret room in the house behind Otto's office on Prinsengracht 263, with its entrance hidden behind a moveable bookcase.

The Franks were joined by four other Jews: Hermann van Pels, one of Otto's business associates; Hermann's wife, Auguste; his son, Peter; and later by a German dentist named Fritz Pfeffer. Anne devoted pages of her diary to describing the tension that existed between the annexe's inhabitants, forced to stay indoors at all times in near silence so that the staff working in the warehouse below would not become suspicious.

This secretive, fearful existence, punctuated by the blare of air-raid sirens and the bellow of exploding bombs, was to be Anne's life for two years and 35 days. During this time, she was unable to see the sky or feel the sun on her skin. To fill the hours, Anne studied

ALAMY X4, SHUTTERSTOCK X1

Radio Oranje's monitoring department in London. Its broadcasts inspired Anne's fervour for writing

Otto Frank with his daughters, Margot and Anne. Otto was the only Frank to survive

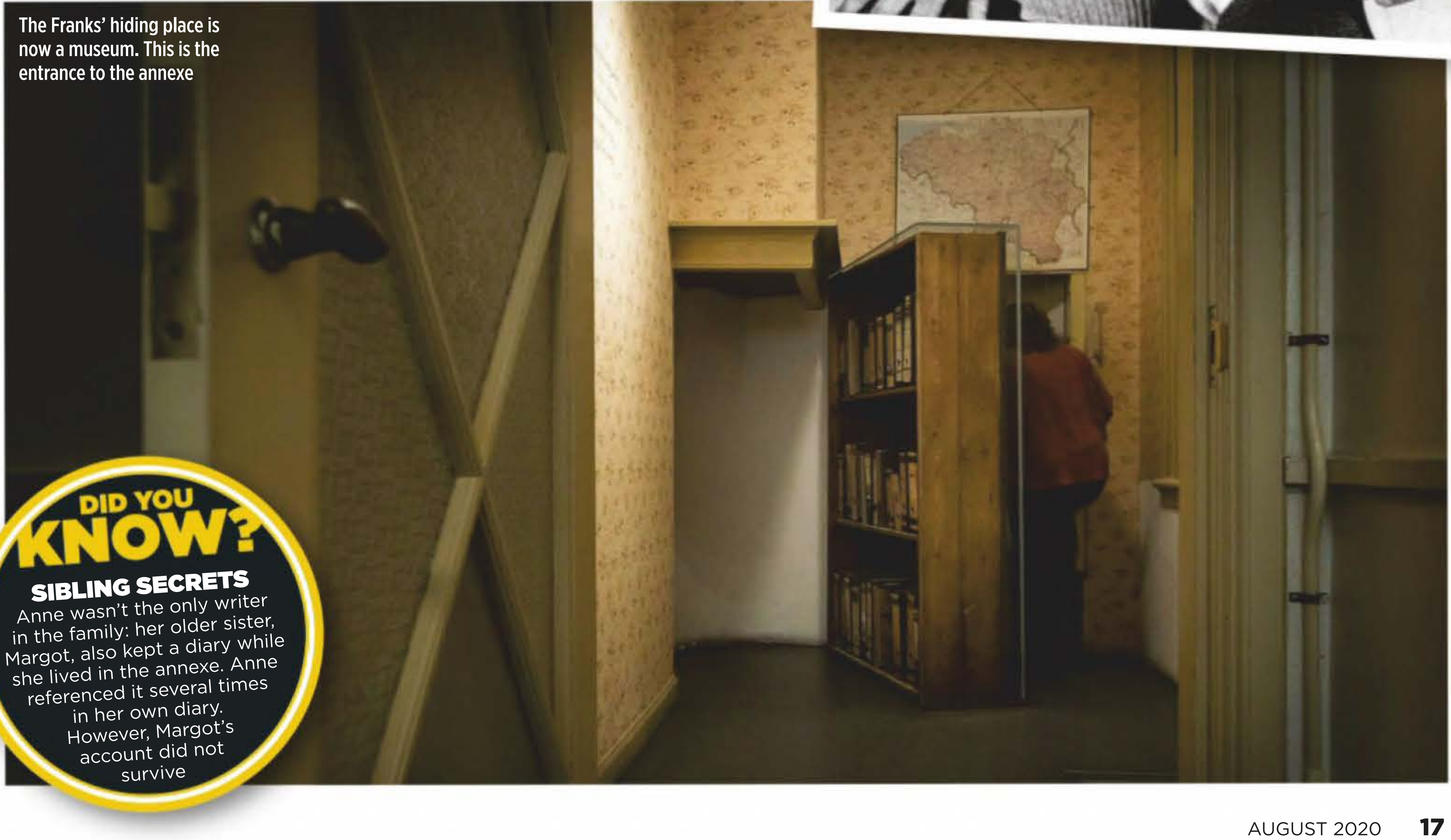
and read books on European history and literature, curled her hair and painted her nails, received short visits from the family's outside helpers – and, of course, wrote in her diary.

With no friends in which to confide, Anne turned to writing to articulate her fears, boredom, and the struggles she faced. On 16 March 1944, she wrote: "The nicest part is being able to write down all my thoughts and feelings; otherwise I'd absolutely suffocate." She addressed many of the entries to 'Kitty', an imaginary friend.

THE MIGHTY PEN

Anne harboured hopes of one day returning to school, as well as spending a year in Paris and another in London. She dreamed of studying the history of art and learning multiple languages, while seeing "beautiful dresses" and "doing all kind of exciting things". And she confided in her diary on 11 May 1944 that she ultimately wanted to become "a journalist, and later on a famous writer".

In addition to keeping her diary, Anne wrote short stories and collated her favourite sentences by other writers in a special notebook. But it was in her diary that she saw a real opportunity for getting published. On 28 March 1944, Anne and her family listened to a BBC programme broadcast illegally by Radio Oranje – the voice of the Dutch government-in-exile. The Dutch Minister of Education, Art and Science, Gerrit Bolkestein (who was exiled in London), urged listeners to preserve their accounts of the war, as he wanted to collate a record of the Dutch experience of Nazi occupation. With ▶

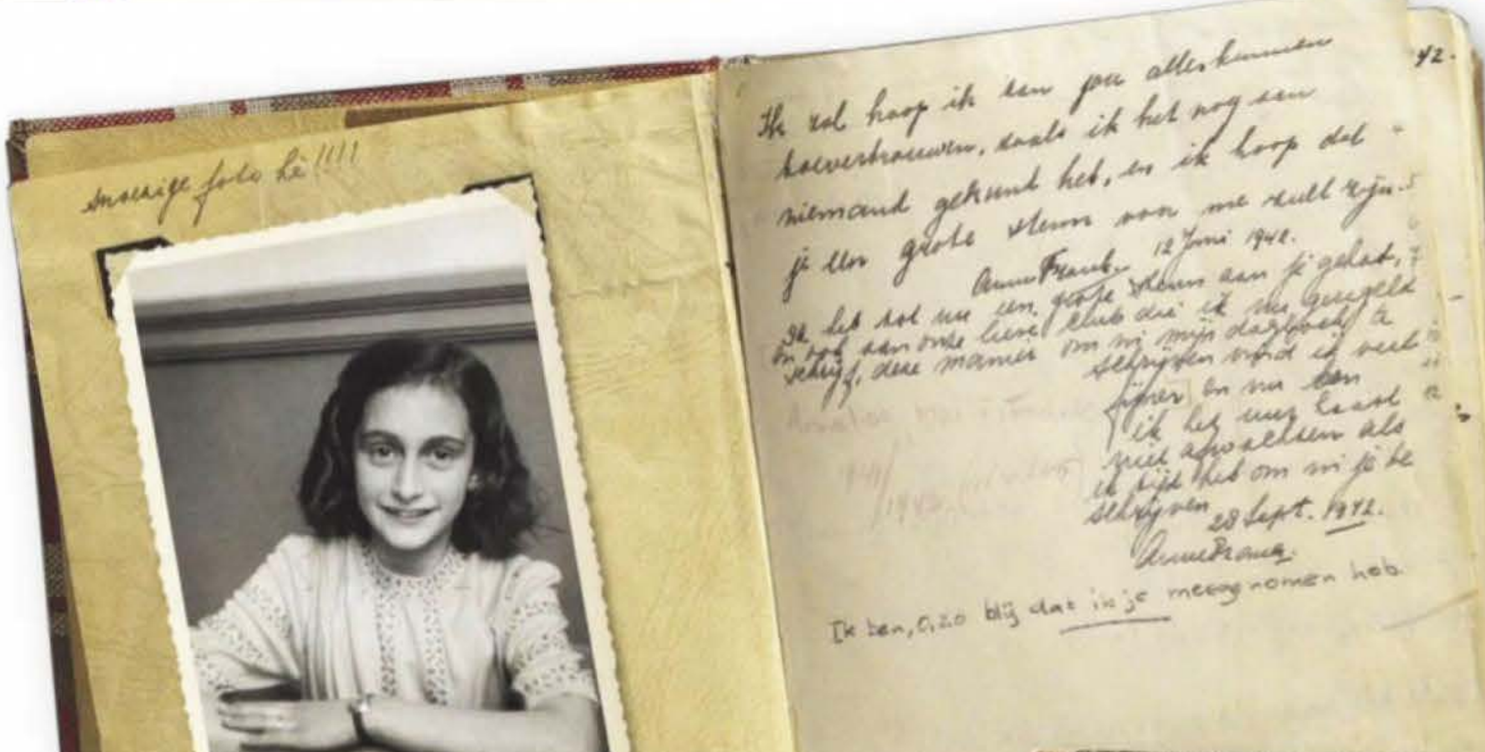


The Franks' hiding place is now a museum. This is the entrance to the annexe

DID YOU KNOW?

SIBLING SECRETS

Anne wasn't the only writer in the family: her older sister, Margot, also kept a diary while she lived in the annexe. Anne referenced it several times in her own diary. However, Margot's account did not survive



LEFT: **Two pages from Anne's first diary. She filled a number of volumes with her accounts of the war**

BELOW LEFT: **Anne's diary was first published in 1947 and titled *The Annex: Diary Notes 14 June 1942 – 1 August 1944***

BELOW: **Miep and Jan Gies on their wedding day. Miep retrieved Anne's diary after the Franks' arrest**

ANNE FRANK
Het Achterhuis
DAGBOEKBRIEVEN
VAN 14 JUNI 1942 - 1 AUGUSTUS 1944

◀ this in mind, Anne began revising and editing her diary, dubbing it *The Secret Annex*. While reworking her text, she still kept up her original, more private diary.

A STOLEN FUTURE

Anne's diary covered a range of subjects, from her burgeoning romantic feelings for Peter to how she coped with life in the annexe. But her last entry, dated 1 August 1944, was rather introspective. Anne ruminated on how she viewed herself as "a bundle of contradictions", saying she was "split in two". One half of her was characterised by "[her] joy in life and, above all, [her] ability to appreciate the lighter side of things": this was the face she normally presented to the world. However, this happy-go-lucky persona was offset by a second, hidden side, "which is much purer, deeper and finer".

She kept her hidden side secret for fear of ridicule, confessing: "I'm afraid they'll mock me, think I'm ridiculous and sentimental and not take me seriously." So, she claimed, no one knew of her "purer" side, admitting: "If I force the good Anne into the spotlight for even 15 minutes, she shuts up like a clam the moment she's called upon to speak and lets Anne number one do the talking. Before I realise it, she's disappeared."

Anne poignantly concluded her final entry by ruminating on how she wished to change her character in the future, making an earnest vow: "[I will] keep trying to find a way to become what I'd like to be and what I could be if… if only there were no other people in the world."

But before she could properly embark upon her attempt to become the type of person she wanted to be, Anne and her family were seized by the Gestapo. Miep Gies, Otto's secretary – who had helped the family go into hiding and frequently visited them – retrieved Anne's diary from the annexe, hoping one day to return it to her.

However, Anne would not be reunited with her beloved diary. She was first sent to Westerbork, a transit camp in the Netherlands, before being deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. More people were murdered here than at any other camp – at least 1.1 million men, women and children perished, 90 per cent of them Jews.

Anne and her sister Margot survived Auschwitz, only to be sent to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Conditions were terrible, with the girls practically starving, exposed to the elements and covered in lice. The sisters contracted typhus, and both succumbed to the disease mere months before the camp was liberated by the British Army on 15 April 1945. Margot was 19 years old when she died; Anne was only 15.

Otto was the only person from the

The Anne Frank House Museum is a popular heritage site in Amsterdam

ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X5

annexe to survive, and he returned to Amsterdam after experiencing the horrors of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Miep gave Anne's diary to Otto in July 1945, but he was unable to read the account in its entirety when it first passed into his hands. He later recalled: "I began to read slowly, only a few pages each day, more would have been impossible, as I was overwhelmed by painful memories." He was surprised, too, by "the completely different Anne" that greeted him from the pages, saying, "I had no idea of the depths of her thoughts and feelings."

After some deliberation, Otto decided to honour his daughter's wish. The diary was first published in the Netherlands on 25 June 1947. Since this first initial print run of 1,500 copies the book has become something of a phenomenon. It has been translated into more than 60 languages, and in 2009 it was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. As Anne wrote her final entry, sequestered in a silent room and only a handful of days away from her arrest, she scarcely could have imagined the number of people who would read her words and come to know and cherish both her outer "exuberant cheerfulness" and her hitherto hidden shyer side. ⊙

BBC RADIO 4 Discover how Anne Frank has inspired fiction writers on an episode of *Front Row*.
bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01fjth7

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

MORE MOMENTOUS EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN AUGUSTS PAST...

1 August 1774

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Chemist Joseph Priestley discovers oxygen while working as the tutor to Earl William Petty's children. Using a 'burning lens', he put a piece of mercuric oxide inside a glass receptacle and directed a beam of light onto the lump. This released a colourless gas that set a nearby candle alight.

August AD 565

NOT TODAY, NESSIE!

On his arrival in Scotland, an Irish monk called St Columba encounters some Picts burying a body. The deceased man had apparently been swimming in the river Ness when he was bitten by a fearsome creature. According to legend, Columba himself then saw the Loch Ness monster and promptly invoked God's name, forcing the beast to flee.

10 August 1792

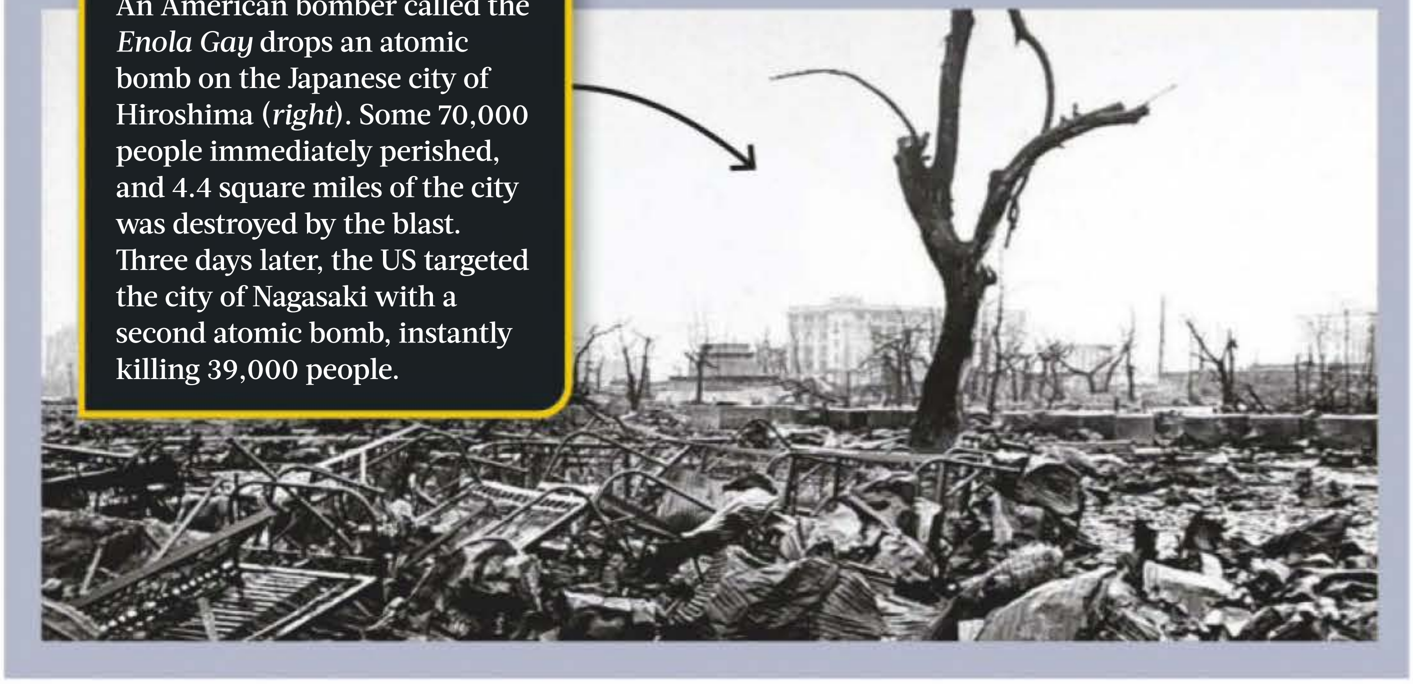
REVOLUTIONARY UNREST

In the early hours of 10 August, a French mob marches on the royal palace, called the Tuileries, to seize King Louis XVI and his queen, Marie Antoinette. The royal family fled, but the rabble remained intent on violence, so they ransacked the palace and butchered around 1,000 people.

6 August 1945

ATOMIC DESTRUCTION

An American bomber called the *Enola Gay* drops an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima (*right*). Some 70,000 people immediately perished, and 4.4 square miles of the city was destroyed by the blast. Three days later, the US targeted the city of Nagasaki with a second atomic bomb, instantly killing 39,000 people.



Yalta and Potsdam, 1945

Words: Charlotte Hodgman

WHAT WAS THE YALTA CONFERENCE AND WHY WAS IT HELD?

Between 4 and 11 February 1945, US President Franklin D Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin met at Yalta – a resort city on the south coast of the Crimean Peninsula, on the Black Sea – for a major conference. Their aim was to thrash out how to bring World War II to an end and plan the post-war reorganisation of Europe – in particular Germany.

The so-called 'Big Three' convened at Livadia Palace, the former summer residence of Tsar Nicholas II, for eight days. Roosevelt, who was in poor health, had suggested a meeting place somewhere in the Mediterranean, but Stalin, who was famously afraid of flying, had refused to go farther than the Black Sea and suggested the Soviet resort of Yalta.

WHAT WAS HAPPENING ELSEWHERE IN FEBRUARY 1945?

The Yalta Conference took place at a critical time in World War II. By the start of 1945 it was clear that, despite continuing resistance, Germany had lost the war. The Battle of the Bulge – the last German offensive on the Western Front, fought in the Ardennes region of Belgium – had shattered what remained of the German army, as well as destroying essential weapons, tanks and supplies. Elsewhere, Stalin's Red Army had captured East Prussia and was less than 50 miles from Berlin. The once mighty Luftwaffe was drastically depleted, while Allied bombs continued to fall on German towns and cities on a daily basis. Hitler was fighting a losing battle.

WHAT DID EACH OF THE 'BIG THREE' WANT FROM THE MEETING?

The three leaders had met 15 months earlier in the Iranian capital Tehran, where they had discussed ways to defeat Nazi Germany, agreed on an invasion of Normandy and had conversations around the Soviets' entry into the Pacific War. The tentative beginnings of what a future peace settlement might look like had been made in Tehran, but it was at Yalta where the real discussions began.

Each leader sat down at Yalta with specific goals in mind. For Roosevelt, ending the ongoing war with Japan was of paramount importance, but to achieve this, he needed Stalin's military help. The US president also wanted the Soviets to join the UN – a new global peacekeeping body – which it did, remaining a member until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Stalin's priority at Yalta was to get his country back on its feet and increase its standing on the European political stage. The Soviet Union, whilst crushing German forces on the eastern front, had been devastated by the war, with an estimated 27 million Soviet citizens (around one in seven) killed during the conflict, and vast swathes of industry, farming, cities and homes obliterated. Stalin needed money to rebuild his battered country, and pressed for huge reparations from Germany, as well as spheres of influence in Eastern Europe to prevent further invasions, and ensure that Germany could never threaten world peace again.

Churchill, too, was keen to see an end to any future German threat, but he was also concerned about extending the power of the USSR and wanted to see fair and free government across Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, in whose defence Britain had declared war with Germany in 1939. Both he and Truman were worried that inflicting huge reparations on Germany, as had been done after World War I, could, in the future, create a similar economic situation in the country that had led

▶

DID YOU KNOW?

LONG JUMP? IT'S A LONG SHOT

At the Tehran Conference of 1943, Soviet agents alleged that the Germans were planning Operation Long Jump – a plot to assassinate the Big Three at the same time, only for it to be called off at the last minute. Aspersions have since been cast on whether the plot ever existed.

GETTY IMAGES X2

MAIN: **The original 'Big Three' at Livadia Palace in Yalta: Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin. None of them came away from the summit with everything they had hoped for**

BELOW: **US soldiers of 17th Airborne round up surrendering Germans during the Battle of the Bulge**

to the rise and acceptance of the Nazi Party. With differing priorities and world views, it was clearly going to be difficult for the Big Three to reach an agreement.

WHY WASN'T FRENCH LEADER CHARLES DE GAULLE PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE?

De Gaulle, by unanimous consent from all three leaders, was not invited to Yalta, nor to the Potsdam Conference a few months later; it was a diplomatic slight that created deep and lasting resentment. Stalin in particular felt that decisions about the future of Europe should be made by those powers who had sacrificed the most in the war. If France was allowed to participate at Yalta, other nations, too, would arguably have had an equal right to attend.

WHAT WAS EVENTUALLY AGREED AT YALTA?

The decisions made at Yalta demonstrate the extent to which power had shifted between the Allies over the course of the war. Once Germany's unconditional surrender had been received, it was proposed that the country, and its capital, be split into four occupied zones the fourth occupation zone was granted to France but, at Stalin's insistence, would be formed out of the American and British zones.

The fate of Poland was a key sticking point in negotiations. For centuries, the country had been used as a historical corridor for armies intent on invading Russia, and Stalin was determined to retain the regions of Poland that he had annexed in 1939 after the Soviet invasion. But he conceded to Churchill's demand that free elections be held in all Nazi liberated territories in Eastern Europe, including Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Poland.

Other key decisions included the demilitarisation of Germany; the payment of reparations by Germany, partly in the form of forced labour; the representation of two of the 16 Soviet Socialist Republics (Ukraine and Byelorussia) at the UN, and Soviet participation in the war against Japan, following Germany's surrender. Another concession made by the US and Britain was to allow all former Soviet prisoners of war, including those who had changed sides and fought for Germany, to be forcibly repatriated back to the USSR.

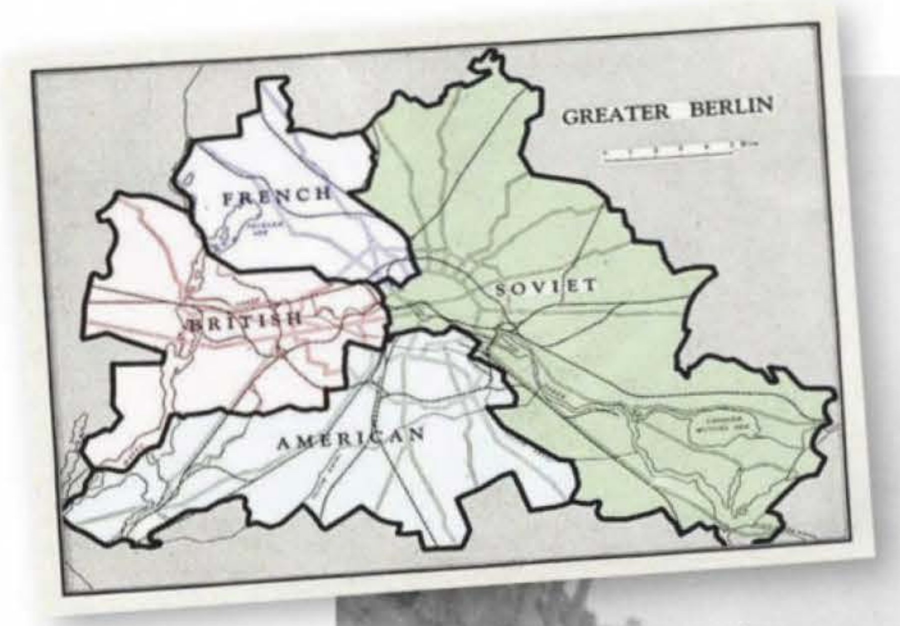
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

None of the Big Three left Yalta with everything they had set out to achieve, but a public show of unity and cooperation was widely reported as they went their separate ways. At the conclusion of the conference, an agreement was made that they would meet once more after Germany had surrendered, so that they could make firm decisions on any outstanding matters, including the borders of post-war Europe. This final meeting took place at Potsdam, near Berlin, between 17 July and 2 August 1945.

WHAT HAD HAPPENED BETWEEN THE ENDING OF THE YALTA CONFERENCE AND THE MEETING AT POTSDAM?

Aside from Germany's surrender in May 1945, the political landscape had changed considerably in the five months that had passed since Yalta. Roosevelt, who had been seriously ill at Yalta, had died of a massive brain haemorrhage in April 1945, so it was the new US President Harry Truman who travelled to Berlin, accompanied by his newly appointed Secretary of State James Byrnes.

Promises made at Yalta had also been rescinded. Despite pledging free Polish elections, Stalin was already making moves to install a communist government in that country and many Poles, both in Britain and elsewhere, felt they had been sold out by Truman and Churchill. And despite the Pacific War that was still



ABOVE: **Berlin was divided into four zones under Allied control, with the Soviets gaining the lion's share**

RIGHT: **Czechoslovakians march through war-ravaged Prague to celebrate victory over the Germans in May 1945**

ROOSEVELT DEAD

Roosevelt, who died between Yalta and Potsdam, had been criticised for being too soft on the Soviets

ABOVE: **By the end of Potsdam, both Britain and the US had new leaders. Seated (*l-r*) are Attlee, Truman and Stalin**

BELOW: **Germans were ordered to leave the Western Territories of Poland and return to Germany**

raging in the East, Stalin had not yet declared war on Japan or provided military support to the US.

WHAT WAS DIFFERENT ABOUT THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE?

The political atmosphere at Potsdam was decidedly more strained than at Tehran and Yalta. President Truman was far more suspicious of Stalin and his motives than Roosevelt, who had been widely criticised in the US for giving into Stalin's demands over Poland and Eastern Europe. Truman was also open in his dislike of communism and Stalin personally, stating that he was "tired of babying the Soviets".

Further upheaval was to come, though, with the results of the British general election, which had taken place on 5 July. The announcement, made three weeks later on 26 July (to allow the votes of those serving overseas to be counted) saw a decisive victory for the Labour Party and meant that Churchill and his Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden were replaced at the conference – from 28 July – by Britain's new Prime Minister Clement Attlee and his Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin. And although war against Japan was still ongoing, the lack of a common European enemy saw the Big Three find it harder to reach a mutually acceptable compromise on what the post-war political reconstruction of Europe would look like.

Another important development had also occurred since Yalta – one that would have a profound global impact. A week into the conference, after gaining Stalin's agreement that the Soviets would join the Pacific War, Truman casually informed Stalin that the US was in possession of "a new weapon of unusual destructive force": the atomic bomb, which had been tested for the first time on 16 July.

> "A week into the conference, Truman casually informed Stalin that the US was in possession of the atomic bomb"

WHAT WAS FINALLY DECIDED AT POTSDAM?

Once again, the fate of post-war Poland proved to be one of the biggest stumbling blocks of the conference, and it was finally agreed that Stalin would retain the land he had annexed in 1939. By way of compensation for land lost to the USSR, Poland was to be granted large areas of Germany, up to the Oder-Neisse Line – the border along the Rivers Oder and Neisse. But there was still no firm agreement that Stalin would adhere to his Yalta promise and ensure free elections in Eastern Europe.

As had been discussed at Yalta, Germany and Berlin were to be divided into four zones with each Allied power receiving reparation from its own occupation zone – the Soviet Union was also permitted to 10-15 per cent of the industrial equipment in the western zones of Germany in exchange for agricultural and other natural products from its own zone.

With regards to Germany itself, it was confirmed that administration of that country was to be dictated by the 'five Ds': demilitarisation, denazification, democratisation, decentralisation and deindustrialisation, and Germans living in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia at the end of the World War II were to be repatriated back to Germany.

As one war ended, the dawning nuclear age – beginning with the Trinity test on 16 July 1945 (*below*) – heralded a new, cold conflict

DID POTSDAM SUCCEED IN ITS AIMS WITH REGARD TO EUROPE?

Although some agreements and compromises emerged at Potsdam, there were still important issues that had not been resolved. Before long, the Soviet Union had reconstituted the German Communist Party in the Eastern Sector of Germany and had begun to lay the groundwork for a separate, East German nation state, modelled on that of the USSR.

WHAT WAS THE POTSDAM DECLARATION?

Though Germany was the focus at Potsdam, on 26 July the US, Britain and China issued the Potsdam Declaration: an ultimatum calling for the unconditional surrender of Japan. Stalin, not being at war with Japan, was not party to it. The Japanese did not surrender, and just days after the conference ended, the US dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki – which ultimately did what the Potsdam Declaration could not. Within weeks, Stalin had accelerated his own nuclear weapons programme, detonating its first atomic bomb – First Lightning – at a remote test site in Kazakhstan on 29 August 1949. The stage for the Cold War had been set. ⊙

BBC WORLD SERVICE *Chain Reaction*, which examines the life of Leo Szilard, whose work led to the development of the atomic bomb, is scheduled for August (*see page 79*)

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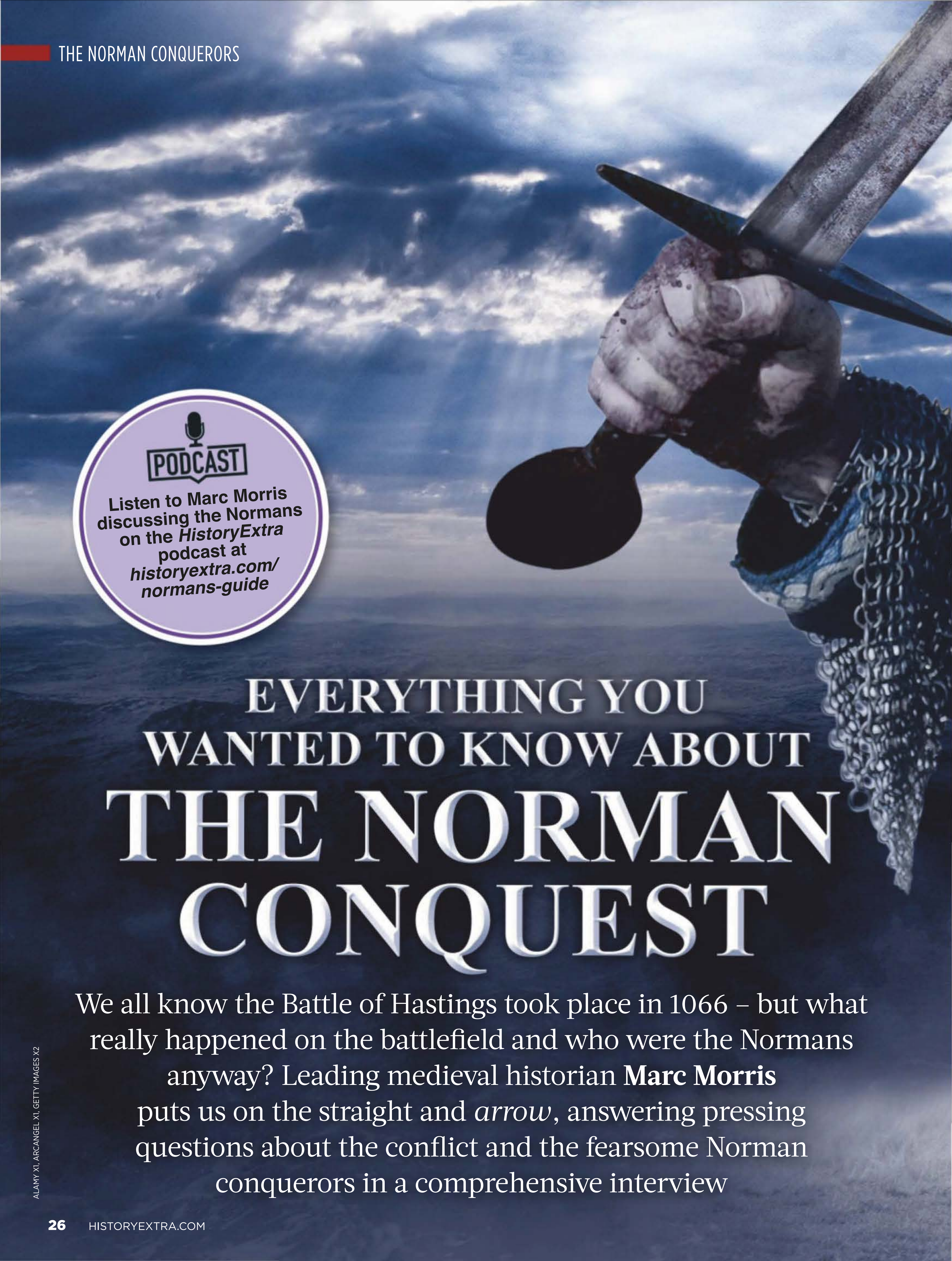


PODCAST

Listen to Marc Morris discussing the Normans on the *HistoryExtra* podcast at *historyextra.com/normans-guide*

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NORMAN CONQUEST

We all know the Battle of Hastings took place in 1066 – but what really happened on the battlefield and who were the Normans anyway? Leading medieval historian **Marc Morris** puts us on the straight and *arrow*, answering pressing questions about the conflict and the fearsome Norman conquerors in a comprehensive interview

ALAMY X1, ARCANGEL X1, GETTY IMAGES X2

Q: Before we get on to the Battle of Hastings itself, could you explain who the Normans were, and where they came from?

A: The Normans were originally Scandinavians who invaded Normandy the area of Neustria in Francia from the late ninth century and early tenth century. When the 'Normans' arrived in the region, they didn't eradicate or expel all the native population. Instead, they settled and married into that population. We can't recover the precise numbers of people who did this, however there simply isn't the data.

Q: Were Normans and Vikings the same?

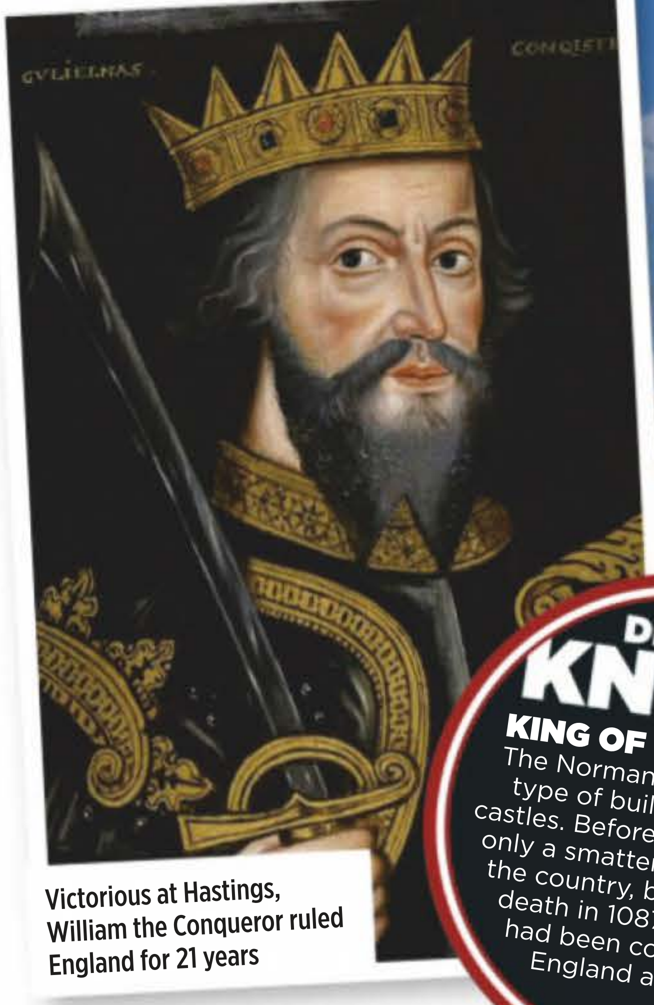
A: In a sense, they were Vikings: the term 'Norman' has the same root as the word 'Norseman' or 'Northman'. And the Normans particularly the elite of Normandy did take pride, to some extent, in their Viking past.

But they also very quickly adopted Frankish and Christian traits. For example, the first ruler (later called a duke) of the Normans was Rolf or Rollo, who had a traditional Scandinavian Viking name. But he called his son William; William called his son Richard; Richard called his son Richard and so on. William, Richard: these are Frankish and Christian names.

The Normans adopted Christianity, too, and by the end of the 10th century, they had begun founding monasteries. They also started building castles and fighting on horseback; they were adapting to all these Frankish customs. So, while they were ancestrally Viking, the Normans were actually quite different from Norsemen especially by 1066.

Q: Why did the Normans invade England? Had the English king Edward the Confessor made a commitment to William before his death, or was William merely being opportunistic when he decided to invade?

A: The short answer is that, in 1066, the succession of England was disputed. Although Edward the Confessor had ruled England for more than 24 years, he and his wife, Edith of Wessex, didn't produce any children, so he had a succession problem.



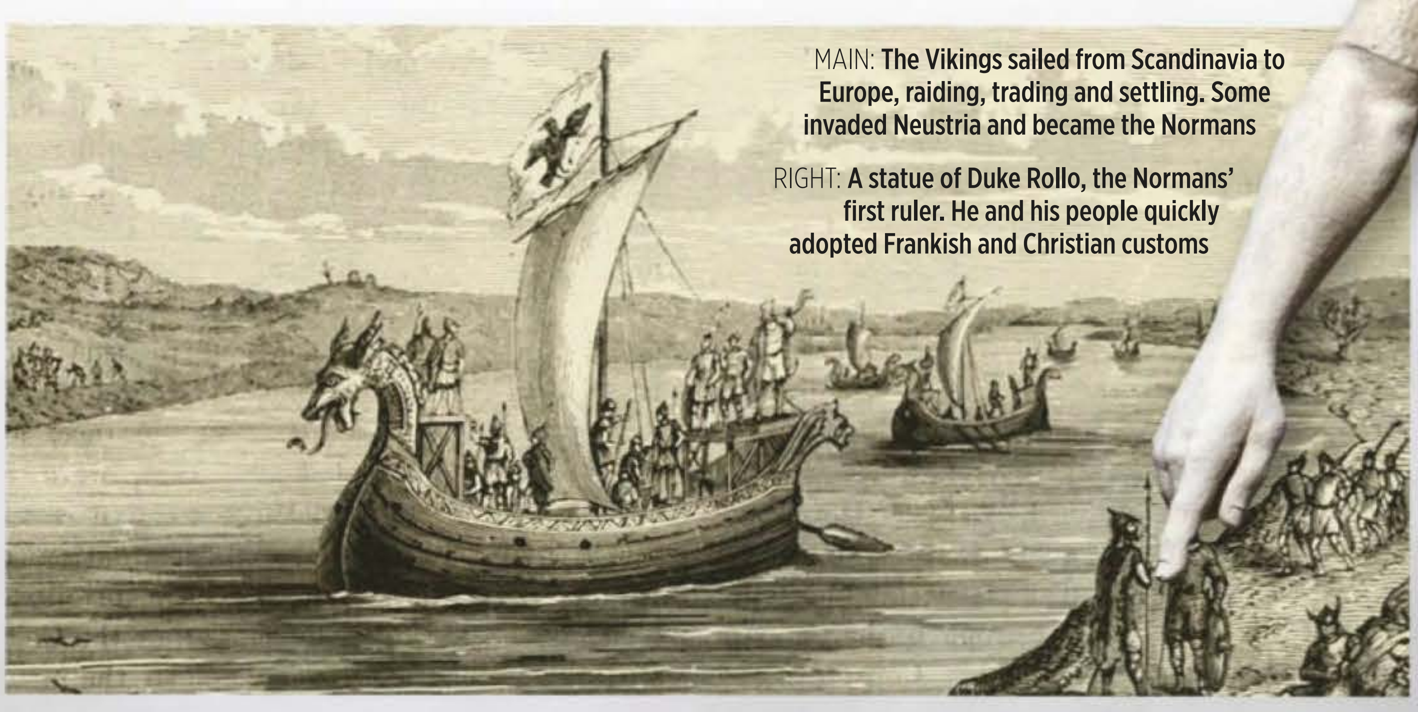
Victorious at Hastings, William the Conqueror ruled England for 21 years

DID YOU KNOW?

KING OF THE CASTLE

The Normans brought a new type of building to Britain: castles. Before 1066, there were only a smattering of castles in the country, but by William's death in 1087, around 500 had been constructed in England and Wales.

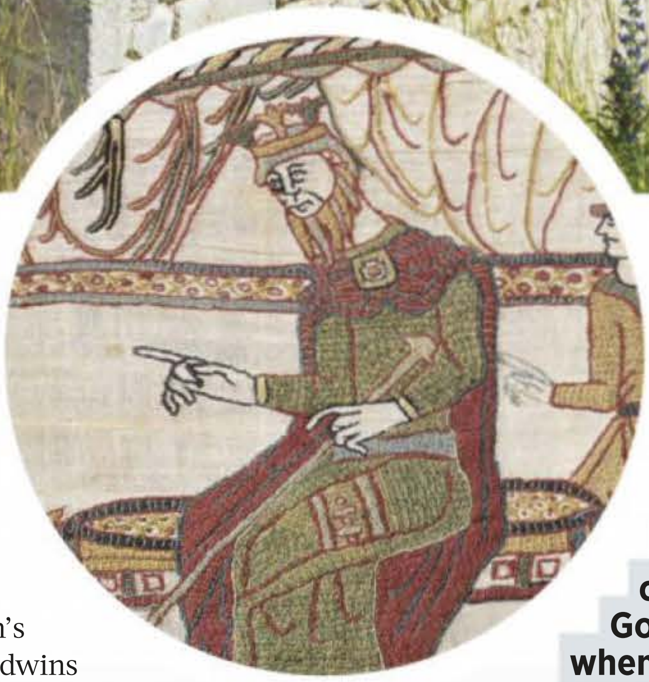
> "For the last 14 years of his reign, Edward the Confessor was little more than a cypher for the Godwins"



MAIN: The Vikings sailed from Scandinavia to Europe, raiding, trading and settling. Some invaded Neustria and became the Normans

RIGHT: A statue of Duke Rollo, the Normans' first ruler. He and his people quickly adopted Frankish and Christian customs

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X2, BAYEUX TAPESTRY-11TH CENTURY © BAYEUX MUSEUM X1



Fifteen years earlier, in 1051, Edward had fallen out with his very powerful father-in-law and brothers-in-law, the Godwinsons (or Earl Godwin and his sons, if you prefer) and expelled them. Edward was married to Earl Godwin's daughter, Edith, and the Godwins had assumed that the union would result in lots of little Godwin-Wessexes running around: they would have solved the issue of succession. But, for whatever reason, the pair remained childless.

Edward's solution to the succession problem in 1051 was to invite William of Normandy to England. The evidence for the visit is very solid, as it's mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Although no English sources directly discuss Edward having promised the throne to William, there is a version of the *Chronicle* – the 'D version' – that says William came to England in the winter of 1051–52.

To answer the question, I think the English and Norman sources – along with the behaviour of Edward and the Godwins strongly suggest that Edward *did* make a promise of the throne to William in 1051 52.

ABOVE: **Edward the Confessor (*pictured*) apparently promised the throne to William**

TOP: **The Normans built many castles in Normandy, including the Ivry la Bataille**

Q: If there had been a promise, why did the king's council ratify Harold Godwinson's succession when Edward died?

A: When the Godwins came back in 1052, there was a Godwin *revanche* (revenge), and they effectively reduced Edward to a rubber stamp; for the last 14 years of his reign, he was little more than a cypher for the Godwins. I think that explains why the Witan the king's council decided to back Harold Godwinson in 1066.

After all, by the end of the 1060s, all four Godwin brothers (who weren't either dead or in prison) had an earldom each, and the family had a vast amount of powerful friends and supporters. The Archbishop of Canterbury supported the Godwins and by 1060, the Archbishop of York was a Godwinson man, too.

So who was going to say 'no' to the Godwins, when Edward finally died

Continues on p32

THE COUNTDOWN TO WILLIAM'S CORONATION

5 JANUARY 1066

Edward the Confessor dies. The Witan elects Harold Godwinson king, and his coronation takes place the next day. When the news crosses the Channel to William, he starts assembling an army and fleet to invade England.

MID-SEPTEMBER 1066

With the backing of Harold's younger brother, Tostig Godwinson, the Norwegian king Harald Hardrada lands in Yorkshire and enters York, intent on claiming the throne for himself.

25 SEPTEMBER 1066

Harold's forces rush north, and defeat the Norwegians at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, east of York. The fight claims Harald Hardrada and Tostig's lives.

28-29 SEPTEMBER 1066

William of Normandy lands his forces at Pevensey Bay, Sussex, and they promptly start ravaging the local area. After learning of this, Harold goes south to confront William.

14 OCTOBER 1066

William defeats the Anglo-Saxons at the Battle of Hastings. Harold, his brothers Gyrth and Leofwine, and many other English leaders are slain.

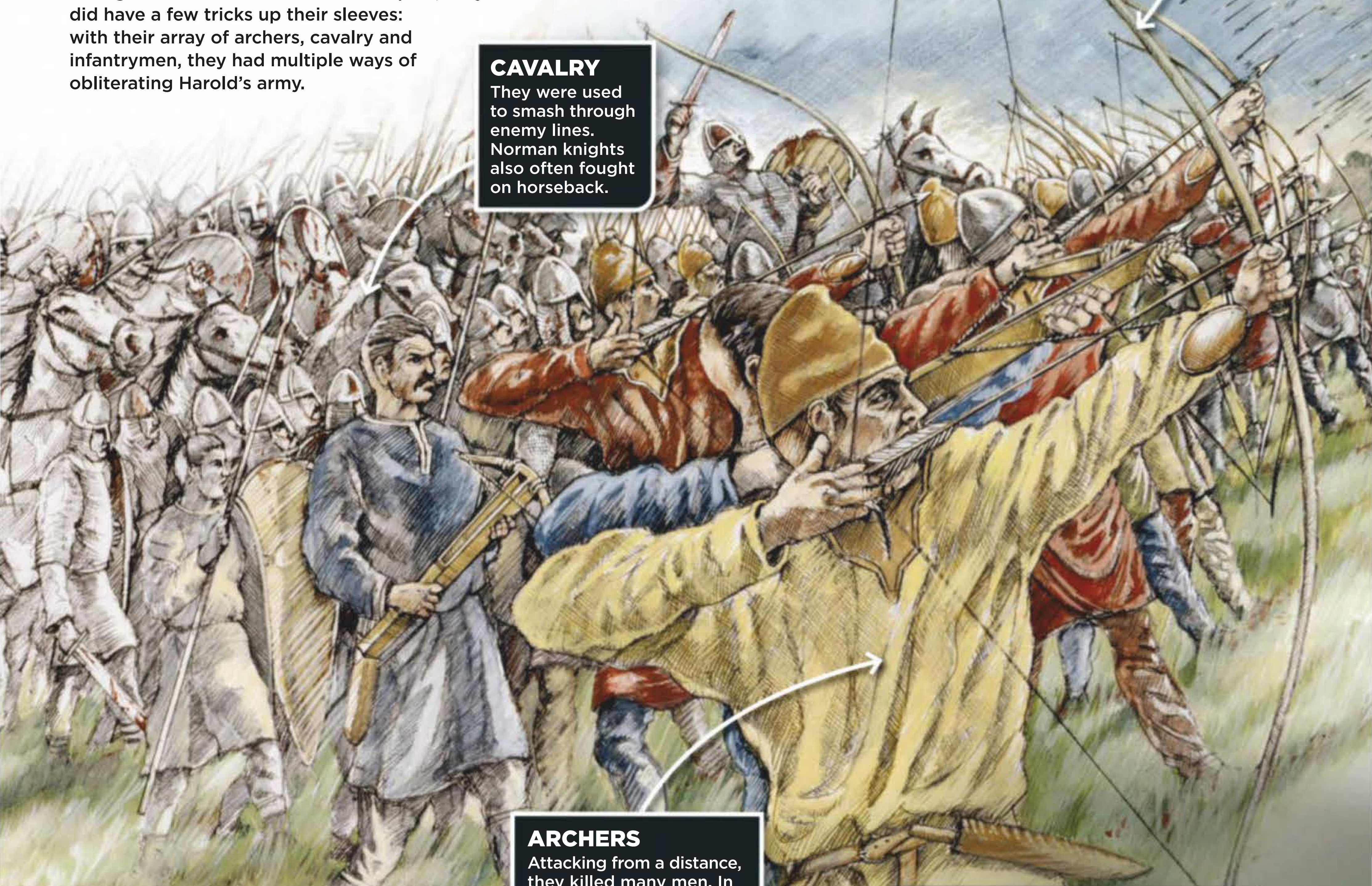
25 DECEMBER 1066

William of Normandy is crowned King of England.

THE ART OF WAR

When the two forces clashed, the Anglo-Saxons set up the battle to their advantage. So how did the Normans secure victory?

The battle took place on Senlac Hill, with Harold's forces holding the best position at the top. Maintaining a closed-shield formation, they created a nearly impenetrable armoured 'wall'. Though the Normans had to attack uphill, they did have a few tricks up their sleeves: with their array of archers, cavalry and infantrymen, they had multiple ways of obliterating Harold's army.



BOW & ARROWS
The Bayeux Tapestry suggests that the Norman archers unleashed a flurry of arrows. Crossbows were also used; these were slower to load, but packed a greater punch.

CAVALRY
They were used to smash through enemy lines. Norman knights also often fought on horseback.

ARCHERS
Attacking from a distance, they killed many men. In general, archers loosed lots of arrows at the start of conflicts to disrupt enemy lines.

KEY BATTLE FACTS

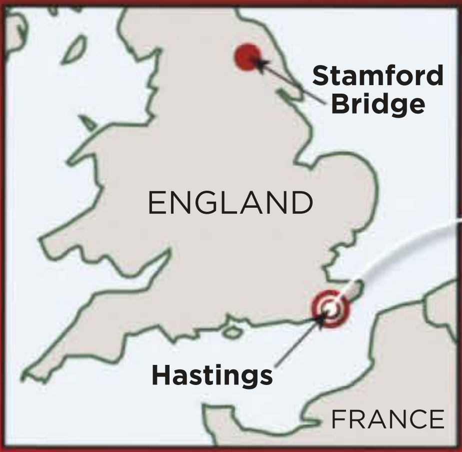
DATE: 14 October 1066

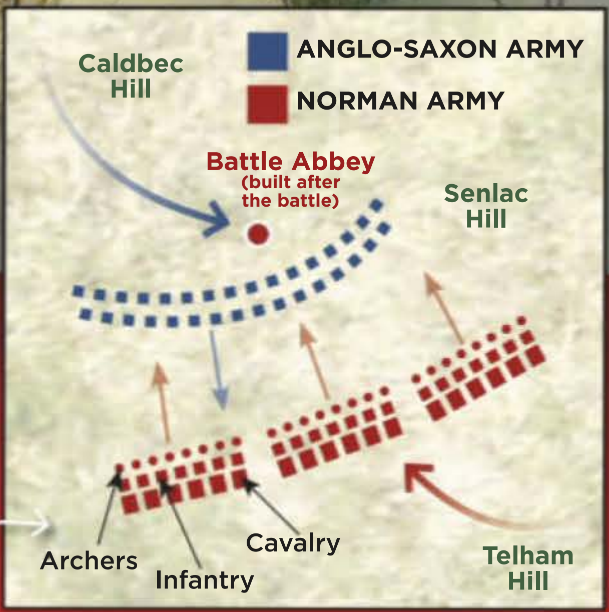
LOCATION: Senlac Hill (now in the town of Battle), Sussex – seven miles northwest of Hastings

TERRAIN: A steep ridge above areas of marsh

FORCES: Both unknown. Anglo-Saxons, possibly up to 8,000; Normans, probably more than 8,000

OUTCOME: A decisive victory for William, and the death of King Harold on the battlefield

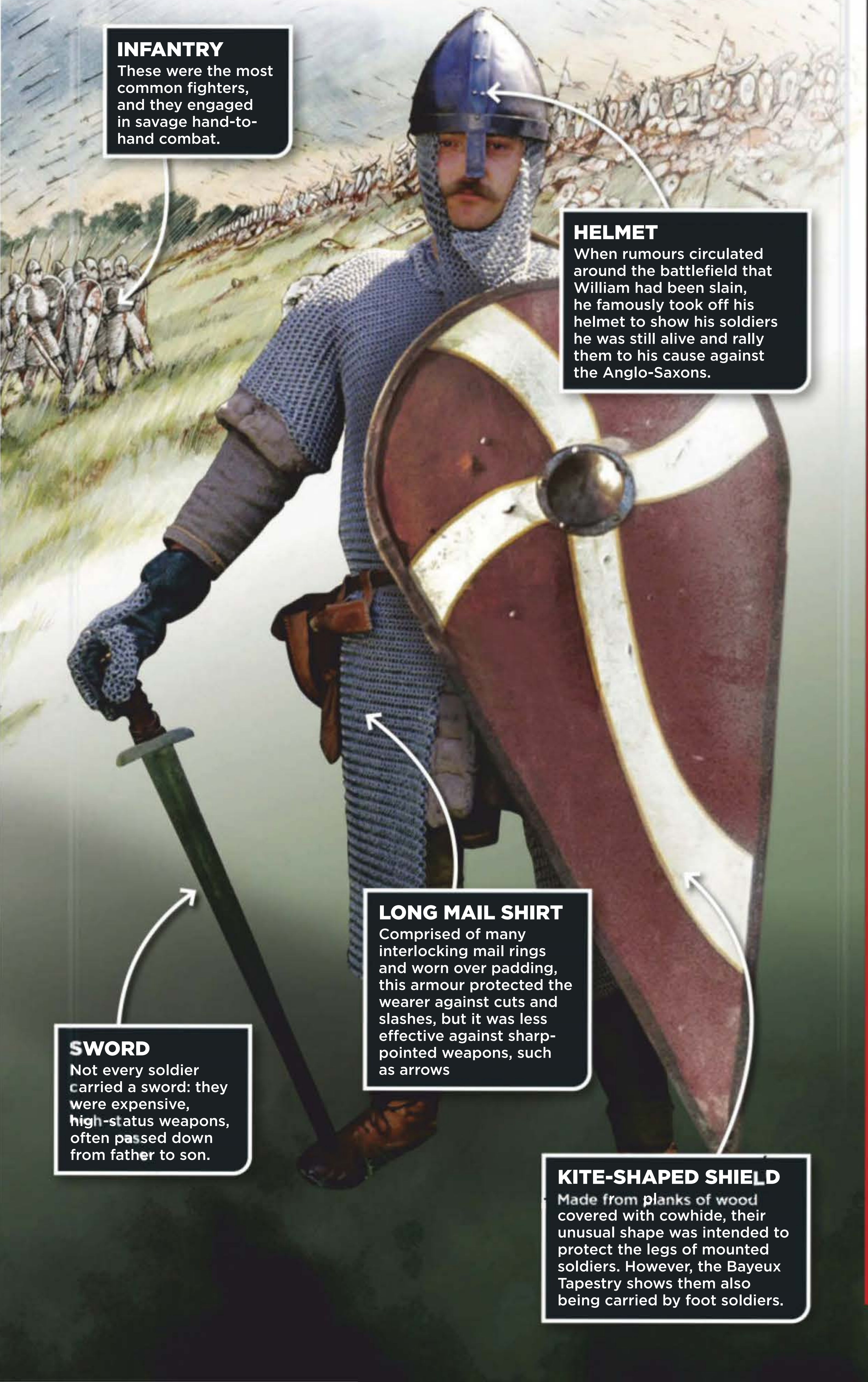

Stamford Bridge
ENGLAND
Hastings
FRANCE


Caldbec Hill
🟦 ANGLO-SAXON ARMY
🟥 NORMAN ARMY
Battle Abbey (built after the battle)
Senlac Hill
Archers
Infantry
Cavalry
Telham Hill

ARMY FORMATIONS
William split his force in three to attack Harold's army, with his French troops to the east, Norman soldiers in the middle and the Bretons to the west

NORMAN WARRIORS

William's forces fought valiantly on the battlefield and ultimately bested the Anglo-Saxons. Take a closer look at their weaponry and armour



INFANTRY
These were the most common fighters, and they engaged in savage hand-to-hand combat.

HELMET
When rumours circulated around the battlefield that William had been slain, he famously took off his helmet to show his soldiers he was still alive and rally them to his cause against the Anglo-Saxons.

LONG MAIL SHIRT
Comprised of many interlocking mail rings and worn over padding, this armour protected the wearer against cuts and slashes, but it was less effective against sharp-pointed weapons, such as arrows

SWORD
Not every soldier carried a sword: they were expensive, high-status weapons, often passed down from father to son.

KITE-SHAPED SHIELD
Made from planks of wood covered with cowhide, their unusual shape was intended to protect the legs of mounted soldiers. However, the Bayeux Tapestry shows them also being carried by foot soldiers.

THE MAIN PLAYERS

ANGLO-SAXONS

HAROLD II
The son of the powerful Earl Godwin of Wessex and Gytha, sister-in-law to Cnut the Great. A daring and experienced soldier, he had famously trounced the Welsh in 1063.

GYRTH & LEOFWINE
Harold's younger brothers. They held land in East Anglia and the south east, respectively. Both were slain at the Battle of Hastings.

NORMANS

WILLIAM OF NORMANDY
The illegitimate son of Duke Robert of Normandy. He succeeded his father at the age of eight and held on to his title in the face of rebellions and invasions. He ruled England from 1066 until his death in 1087.

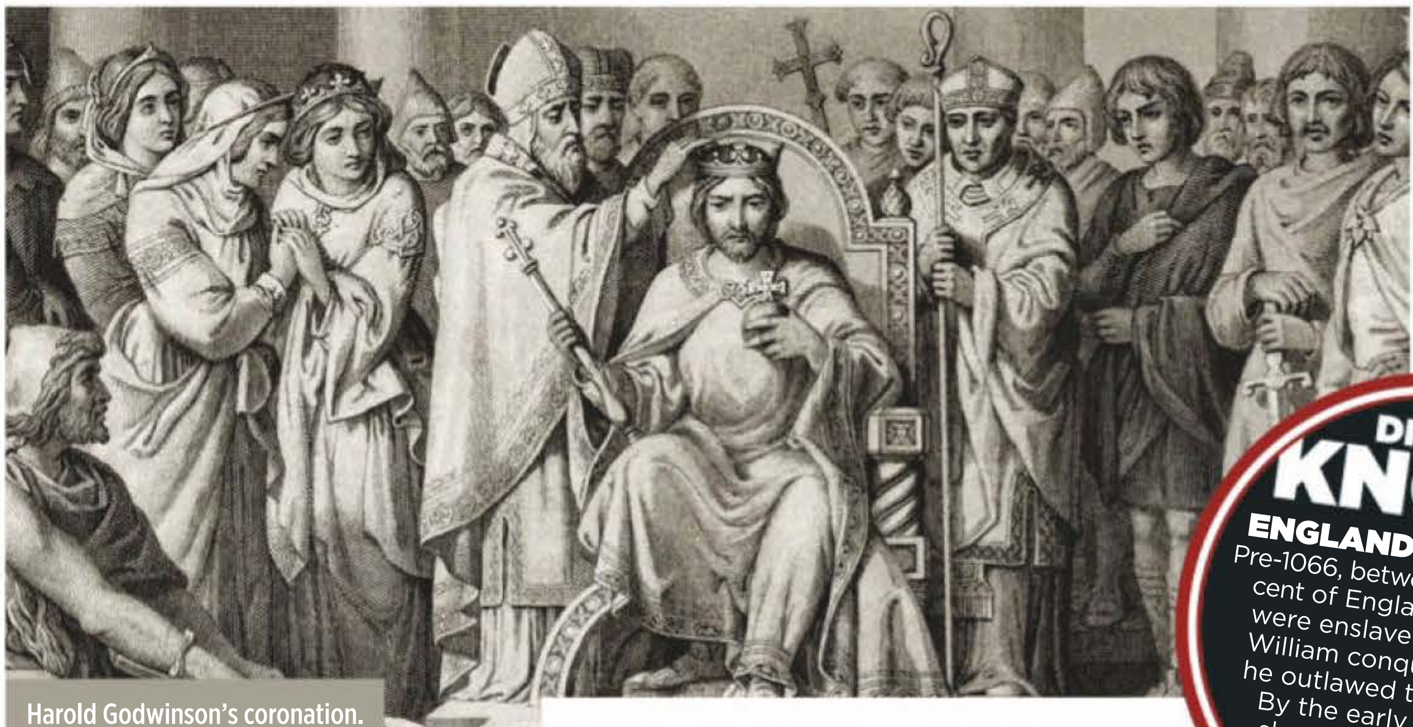
ODO OF BAYEUX
William's half-brother and the Bishop of Bayeux, he fought at the Battle of Hastings and was later made Earl of Kent. He died on a crusade in 1097.

VIKINGS

HARALD HARDRADA
A warrior who became sole king of Norway in 1047. His claim to England's throne was based on a promise supposedly made by King Harthacnut of England. He was killed at the Battle of Stamford Bridge.

TOSTIG
Tostig was an Anglo-Saxon – he was Harold's brother and Earl of Northumbria – but he sided with Hardrada and the Vikings. He died alongside them at Stamford Bridge.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2, ARCANGEL X1

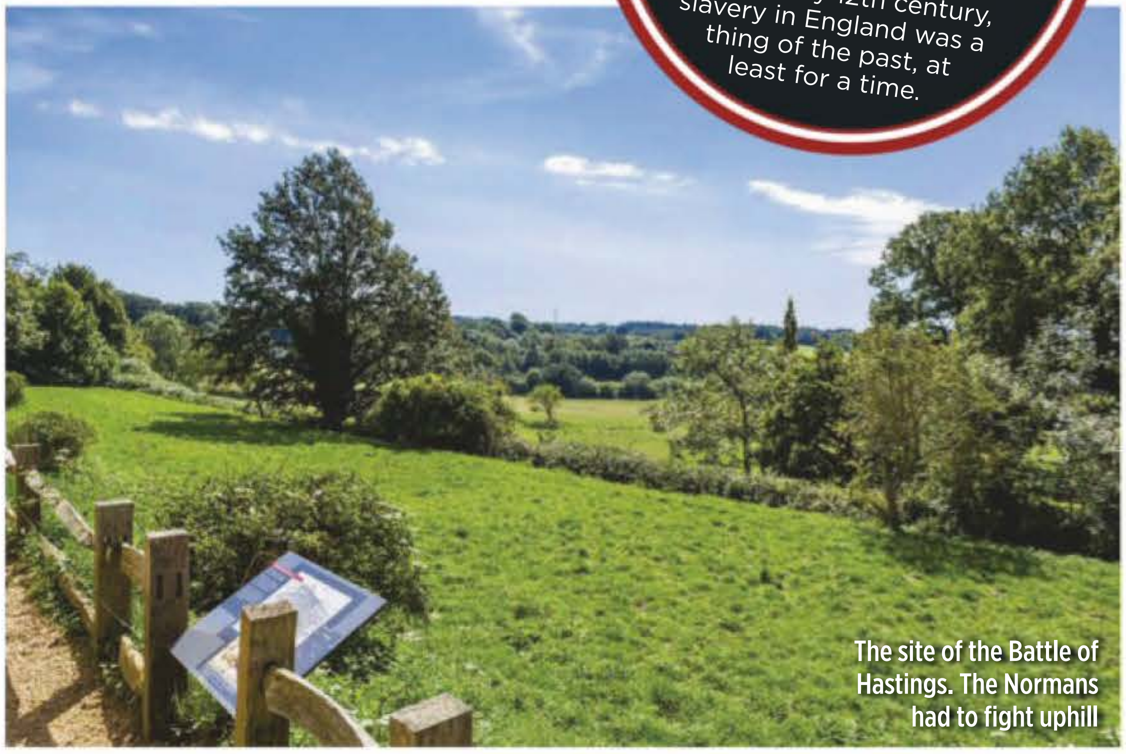


Harold Godwinson's coronation. When news reached William, he began preparing to invade

DID YOU KNOW?

ENGLAND UNCHAINED

Pre-1066, between ten and 30 per cent of England's population were enslaved people. Once William conquered England, he outlawed the slave trade. By the early 12th century, slavery in England was a thing of the past, at least for a time.



The site of the Battle of Hastings. The Normans had to fight uphill

in 1066, and suggest that the throne should go to a Norman duke? The crown was something the Godwins had been tilting at for ten or 20 years. I think that's why the people around the king in 1066 weren't interested in honouring a promise that Edward made when he was free of Godwin control: they were interested in having the man they wanted to rule the kingdom.

Q: Why is the battle fought by William and Harold called the 'Battle of Hastings'?

A: Well, it's straightforward. William landed at Pevensey, on the southeast coast of England, on 28 or 29 September 1066. He only spent a day or so there, though, as he moved immediately east to Hastings, where he made his camp. And this is where the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* locates the Normans at Hastings.

When Harold marched down to confront William, his plan, it seems, was to attack the Normans' camp and catch them unawares as he had caught other invaders. But after discovering that that Harold was on the march William left his camp early in the morning of 14 October 1066. He intercepted Harold as he was approaching the Norman camp, so the two ended up fighting at some previously non descript spot. The *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* simply says they met at "the site of the grey apple tree". But ever since the Battle of Hastings was fought there, the site has been known as Battle.

For almost 950 years, Battle was the uncontested site of the Battle of Hastings both because of its name and the great abbey that exists there, which William built to mark the site of the battle. But there's a conspiracy theory that refutes the story that Battle Abbey's altar was built on the spot where Harold fell, as some argue the tale was actually fabricated in the late 12th century by the author of the *Battle Abbey Chronicle*.

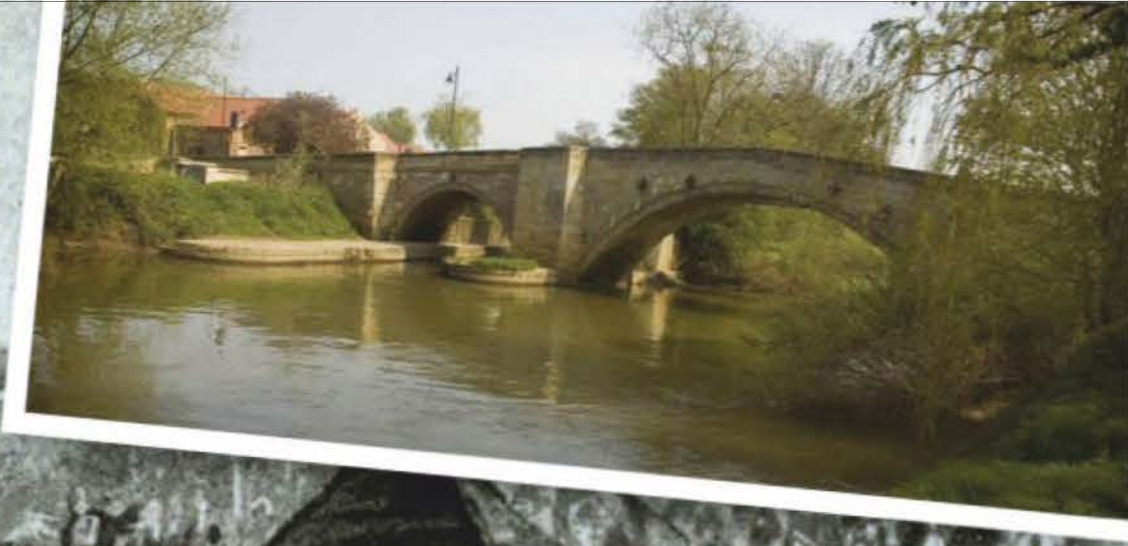
That's just not true: the author of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, who was demonstrably writing before 1100, wrote in his obituary for William that, on the very spot where God granted him the conquest of England, William caused a great abbey to be built. That's not only an English source: it's an early source, meaning we can date the story back to William's own lifetime. It's as close to a good reliable contemporary source as you can get, and of course the abbey is still there, marking the spot, in a stupid place to build an abbey – the side of a hill.

"So who was going to say 'no' to the Godwins in 1066, and suggest that the throne should go to a Norman duke?"

Q: Why did Harold Godwinson choose to make a stand so soon after the Battle of Stamford Bridge?

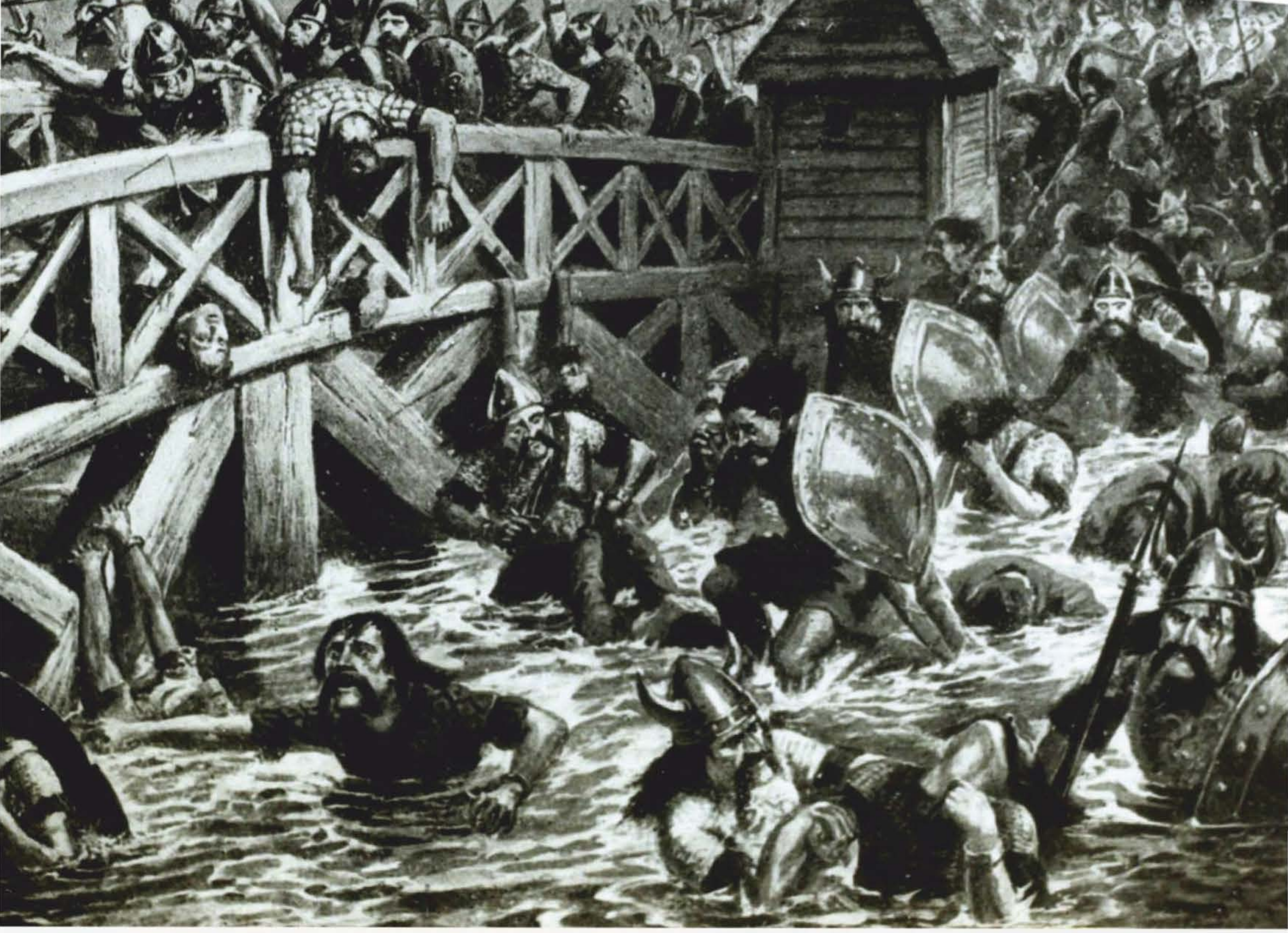
A: I don't know if he had any choice. Harold was in a very difficult position in 1066. He knew about the looming Norman invasion, because William made no secret of it from the start of 1066. By mid to late spring that year, William had obtained permission from the pope, and he began assembling an armada of

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X2



RIGHT: **Stamford Bridge in the East Riding of Yorkshire looks idyllic, but it was the site of a savage battle in 1066**

BELOW: **The Battle of Stamford Bridge saw Harold's army defeat Harald Hardrada's Viking forces**



ships. He recruited men throughout that summer. All this was happening in plain sight on the other side of the Channel.

What didn't appear to cross Harold's mind at all, though, was the fact that the Norwegians were planning to do the same. And the Norwegians, being more of a seaborne power, seemed to assemble very quickly. Harold had all his manpower, all his ships, concentrated on the south coast. He dismissed them in early September 1066 because, as the *Chronicle* says, he simply couldn't hold them together anymore.

And then, within days of having dismissed this huge force, Harold was told that the Norwegians had invaded and were menacing York. He had to rush up to Yorkshire to confront them and, as is well known, he did spectacularly well. On 25 September 1066, at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, Harold surprised the would be invaders. The king of Norway, Harald Hardrada one of the most fearsome warriors of his age was killed by Harold's forces. Harold's younger brother, Tostig, who supported Hardrada, also fell in the course of the battle.

But within a few days of the engagement, Harold learned that the Normans had landed on English shores, and he realised he had to go down south and do the same thing all over again.

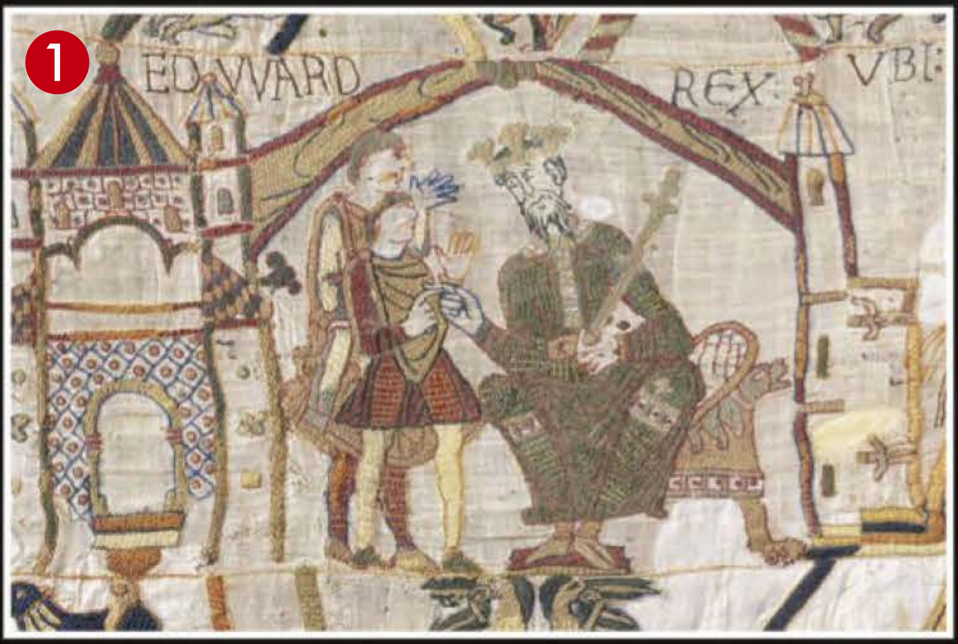
Why didn't he send someone else? Well, you simply couldn't do that if you were a king in the Middle Ages. The whole reason why Harold was a strong candidate for the kingship was that he was a man in his forties with proven experience, both in government and warfare – not a 12-year-old boy with a stronger blood claim.

It was inconceivable that Harold would have sent his brothers, Leofwine or Gyrth, to fight the battle for him. He had to engage William personally, and that's why the timing and the pace of events was dictated by William's landing.

Continues on p36

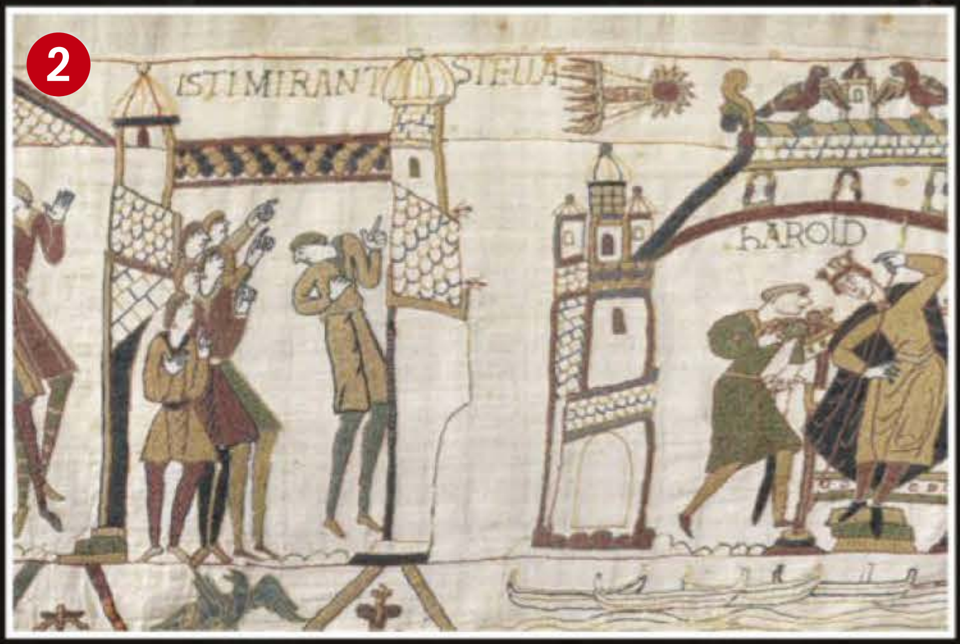
UNRAVELLING SECRETS

At nearly 70 metres long, the Bayeux Tapestry is packed with illuminating scenes. Below are some of its most fascinating panels – and the meanings behind the stitches



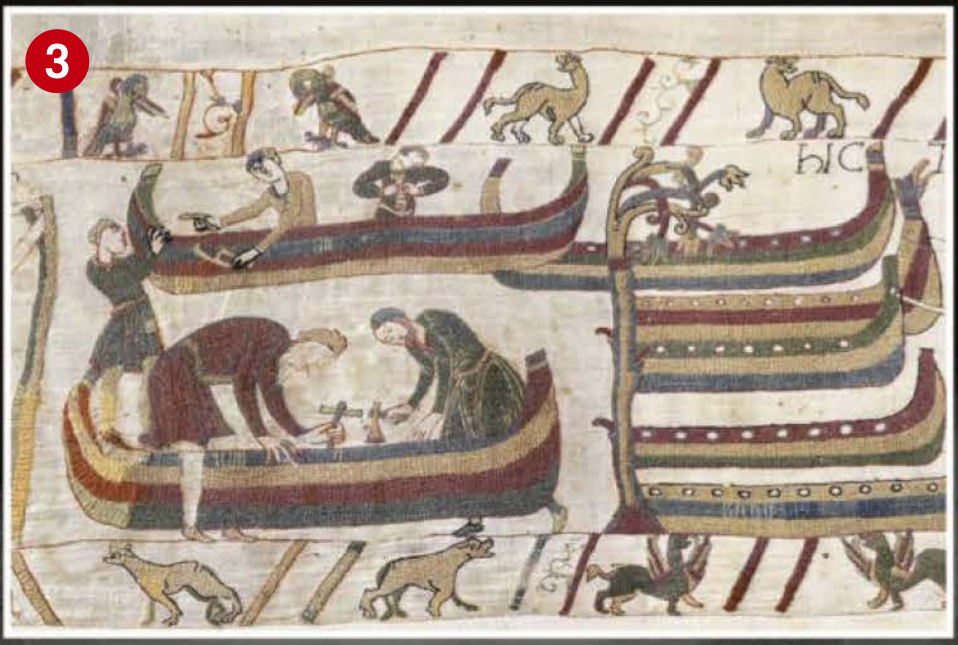
Hollow promises

▲ The first scene of the tapestry depicts Edward the Confessor talking to Harold Godwinson and another figure. The king sent Harold as a messenger to William in Normandy. According to William of Poitiers, Harold was sent to "confirm [Edward's] pledge with an oath": that William would be England's next king.



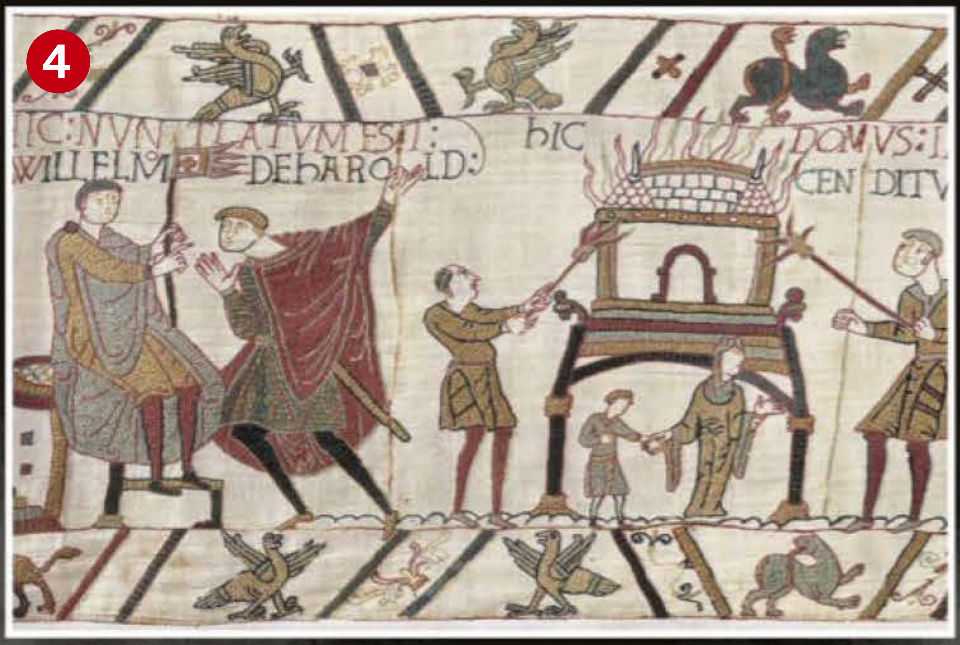
Heavenly wrath

▲ Harold did not honour this oath, and the tapestry depicts his own coronation. Immediately following this scene, Halley's Comet (*centre, top*) passes overhead, to the amazement of onlookers. Many interpreted the comet as a bad omen, meant to signify that God was displeased with Harold for breaking his promise.



Sailing to glory

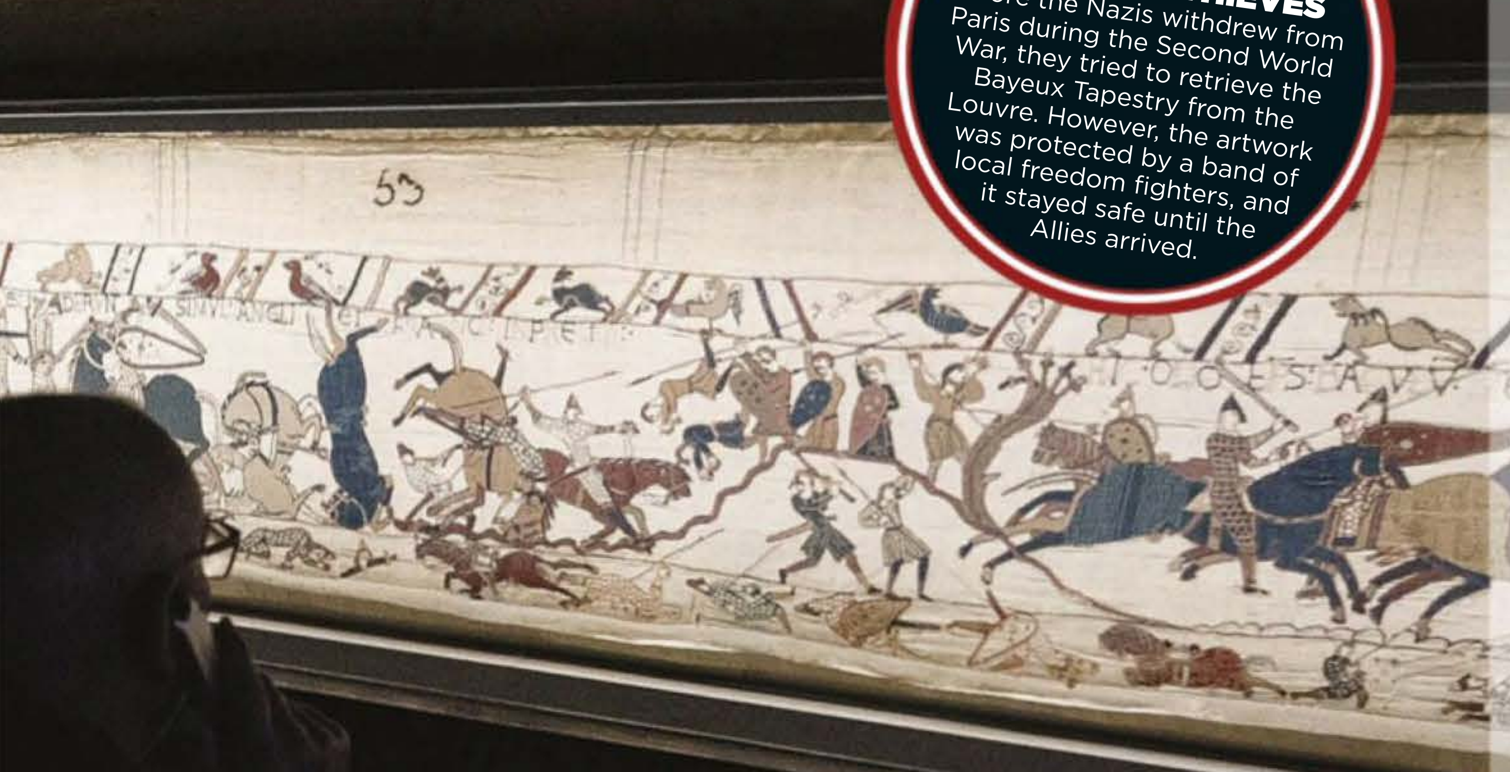
▲ When William heard that Harold had been crowned England's king following Edward's death, he began preparations to attack the newly anointed monarch and claim the throne for himself. Here, Norman men are constructing the fleet of boats that ferried troops and supplies across the Channel to Pevensey.



Shores of destruction

▲ After reaching England, the Normans marched to Hastings and terrorised the locals. On the left-hand side of the image, an envoy shares news of Harold's forces with William; on the right, a woman and child run from a burning building. Such violent acts may have been intended to spur Harold into fighting William.

GETTY IMAGES X1, BAYEUX TAPESTRY-11TH CENTURY © BAYEUX MUSEUM X6



DID YOU KNOW?

THWARTED THIEVES

Before the Nazis withdrew from Paris during the Second World War, they tried to retrieve the Bayeux Tapestry from the Louvre. However, the artwork was protected by a band of local freedom fighters, and it stayed safe until the Allies arrived.

THE TAPESTRY IN NUMBERS

224FT (68.3M)

The tapestry's length – about the length of three short-course swimming pools

626

Humans

37

Buildings

41

Ships

202

Horses and mules

10

Colours of wool thread used

9

Panels of woven cloth used

1

Comet, which appears after Harold's coronation as a portent of disaster

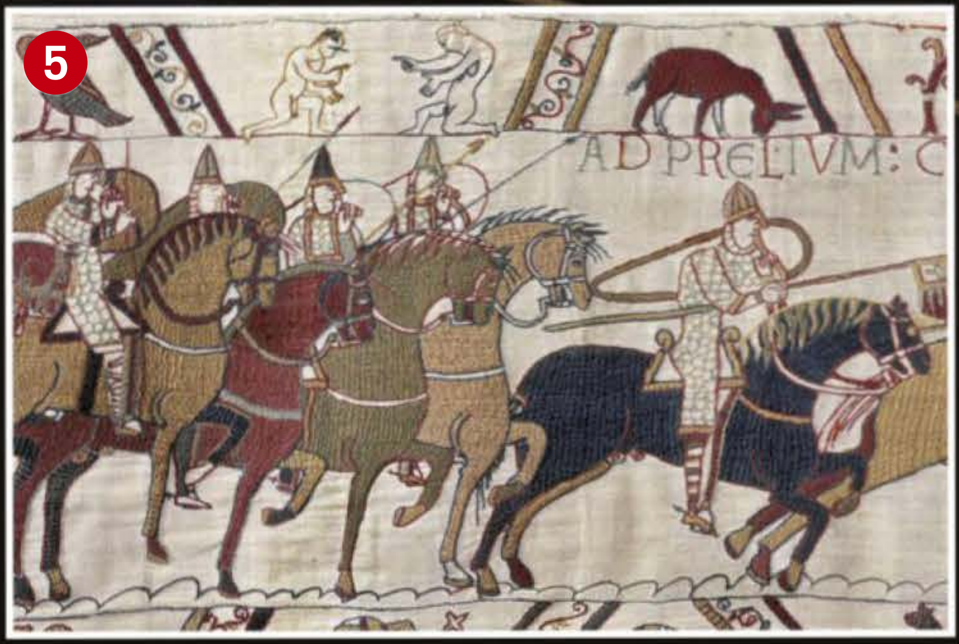
3

Women shown in the main narrative of the tapestry

The battle beckons

▼ Mounted Normans ride to war brandishing lances and spears, ready to fight Harold and his army. A naked man and woman are depicted in the top frieze. This could be a reference to one of Aesop's fables, where a prostitute declares her love for a patron.

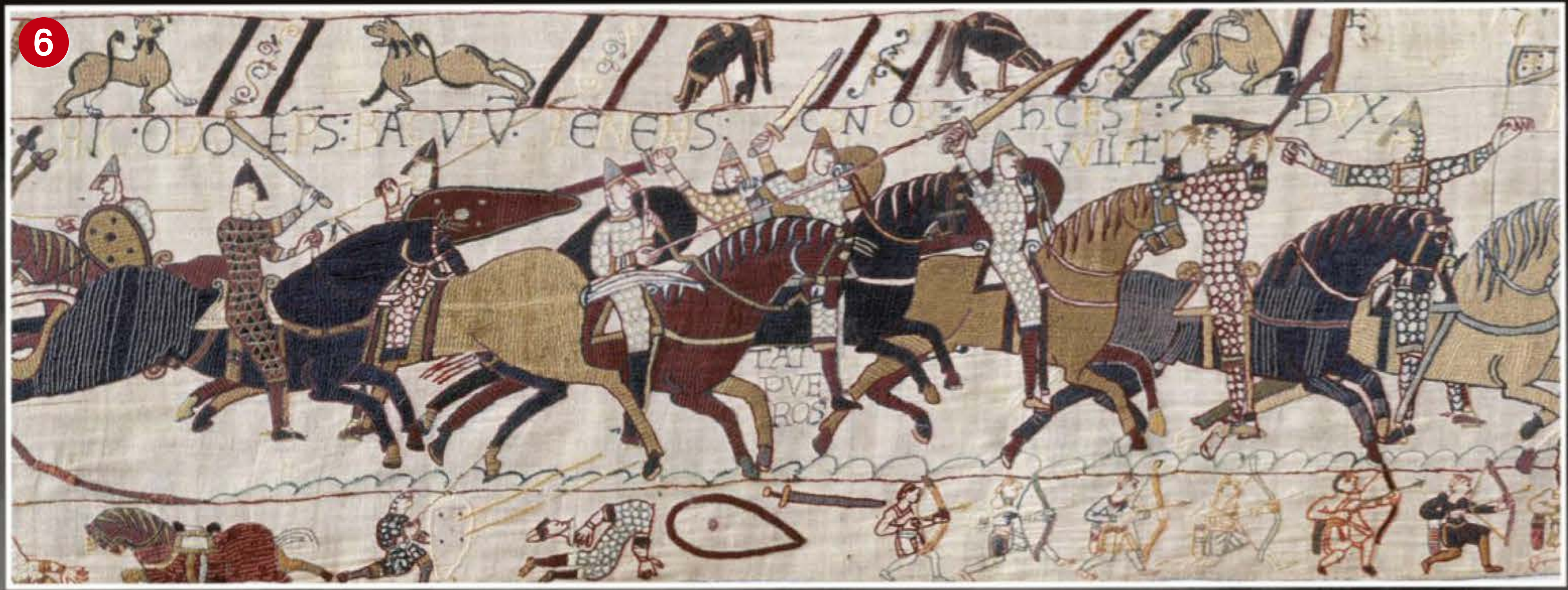
5



Still alive

▼ William (*second from right*) lifts his helmet to show his soldiers he's still alive. The battle didn't end favourably for Harold or his brothers, who were all killed. A plethora of animals – including lions, griffins, and a host of other real and imaginary creatures – line the top frieze, while the bottom frieze is littered with corpses.

6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Q: How long did the Battle of Hastings last?

A: Specifically, in terms of hours, we don't know. But one of the chroniclers writes that it's from the third hour of the day. It's not from sunrise we know it's not, because the Normans had to march six and a half miles to reach the battlefield, and that would have taken them two or three hours. Bearing in mind that the battle took place in late October, if William's troops left at sunrise, it couldn't have started much before nine o'clock in the morning.

But we are told by contemporary chroniclers, both William of Poitiers and the *Song of the Battle of Hastings* (the *Carmen*), that the battle raged until day was turning into night. As dusk falls at around four or five o'clock in October, the conflict seemingly went on for eight or nine hours.

Of course, once Harold died, the fight didn't simply end. It became a rout which we're told lasted through the night so you *could* say the battle lasted for 24 hours. But if the battle is seen to have been decided when Harold died, then to pinch a phrase from Monty Python – it was over by about teatime.

Q: Why did William and the Normans win?

A: The contemporary answer would have been because God favoured him. When you went to battle in the Middle Ages, you were putting your dispute to the judgment of God. So God judged, according to medieval minds, that William's claim to the throne of England was the greater one.

In terms of how we would analyse William's victory now, one reason is superior generalship: William held his battle line together, while Harold's started to break up. Another, of course, is luck. What ultimately decided the battle was the fact that William survived, whereas Harold died on the battlefield and with lots of projectile missiles flying around, that could have gone either way. So it's a combination of factors, really.

Q: The Bayeux Tapestry famously shows the Battle of Hastings and events that took place in the run up to it. What might have happened to the missing end section?

A: The survival of the tapestry is incredible in itself: to have nearly 70 metres of embroidery from nearly a millennium ago is just astonishing. And we're exceedingly lucky that we have any of it at all, because it was subject to a fair amount of wear and tear.

The sun rises over the site of the Battle of Hastings, where the fighting in 1066 went on into the night

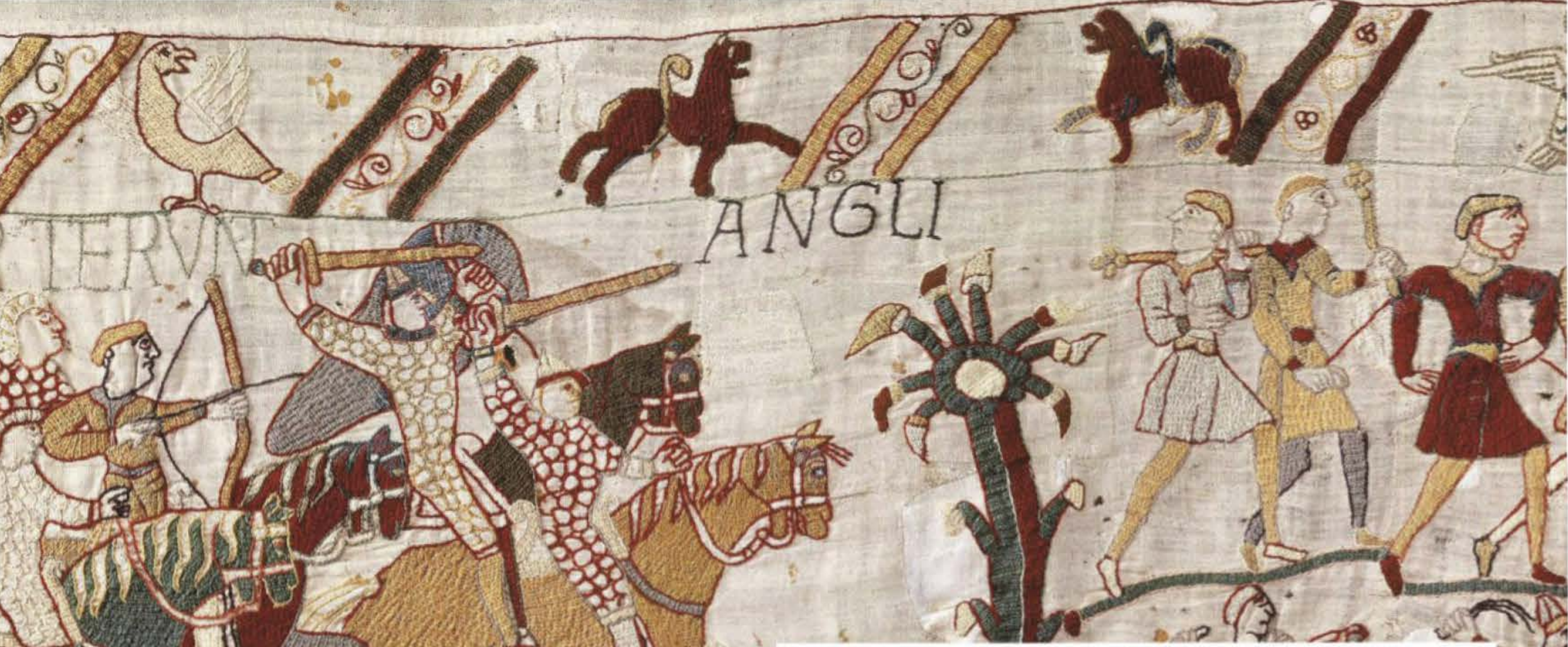
> "It was inconceivable that Harold would have sent his brothers to fight the Normans for him"

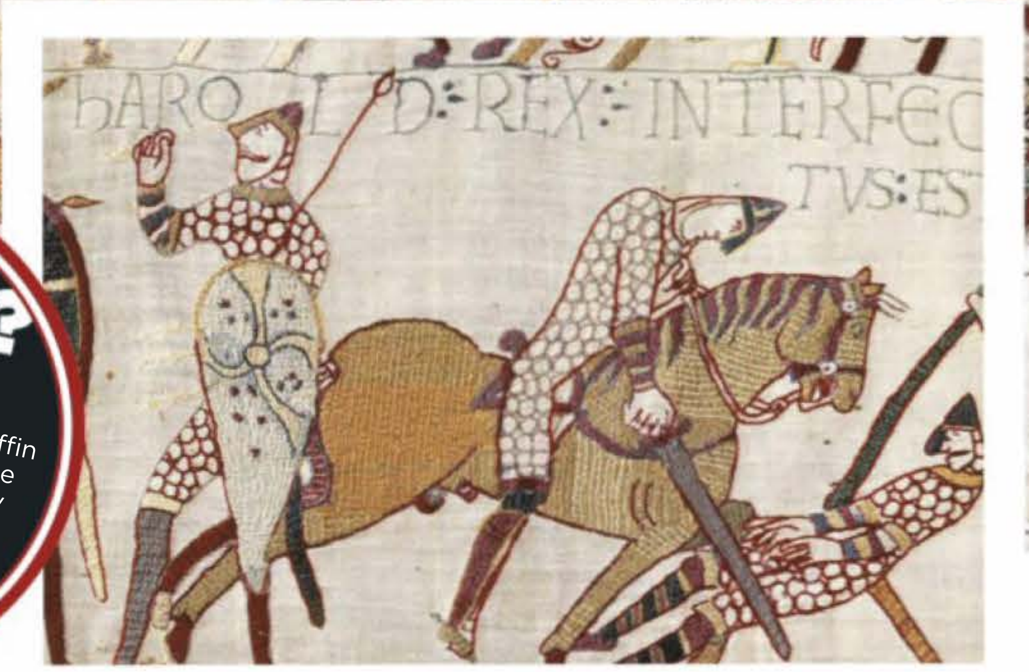
I suspect a lot of the damage to it was not so much from the medieval and early modern period, when it was kept in Bayeux Cathedral and only taken out on the feast of the relics, but from the late 18th century. That's when the tapestry really became famous and was taken to Paris and exhibited at the Louvre; then it was taken back to Bayeux, where it was displayed very badly on spindles. During the French Revolution, it was very nearly cut up and turned into bunting! All these adventures or misadventures would have caused bits of it to fall off.

What seems to be missing from the embroidery is the ending of the story: the tapestry currently ends with Harold's death at the Battle of Hastings. There's a fairly heavily restored part that says: "And then the English flee". But the scene that we think would probably have ended the tapestry is William's coronation in Harold's place. After all, the tapestry starts with an enthroned King Edward

A re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings sees Anglo-Saxon forces (*top*) facing off against the Normans

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1, BAYEUX TAPESTRY-11TH CENTURY © BAYEUX MUSEUM X2





ABOVE: **King Harold seems to pull an arrow from his eye before a Norman knight cuts him down – but did this really happen?**

TOP: **Norman cavalry pursue fleeing English soldiers after the battle has ended**

DID YOU KNOW?

SMELL YOU LATER

When monks tried to push William's body into a stone coffin following his death in 1087, the corpse was too fat to fit. They shoved so hard that the king's bowels burst, releasing a putrid stench that made almost everyone in the abbey flee.

the Confessor, talking to a figure who seems to be Harold Godwinson. It has an enthroned king in the middle Harold himself, once he's taken the throne and thus it makes sense that it would end with William being crowned in Harold's place. So that seems to be the missing last scene.

Q: How did Harold Godwinson die?

A: The very short answer is we don't know, or we don't know for certain.

Then there's a much longer, more complicated answer. It's widely believed that Harold died with an arrow through his eye, because that's how he's depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry. But once you start to unpick that, you open up a can of worms: is he definitely the figure under the word 'Harold' who has an arrow through his eye, or is he actually the figure a few feet further along the tapestry, who is being run down by a Norman on horseback? There are questions about the arrow, too. If you look at the stitching, or the holes on the back of the tapestry, it might be a spear that was reinterpreted as an arrow by 19th century restorers.

Beyond this, what sort of undermines my faith in the tapestry is that it's an artistic source that borrows heavily from other artistic sources. The scenes surrounding the death of Harold, for instance, look very similar to a story in the Apocrypha of the Bible about the death of King Zedekiah. He's a king who rebelled against his overlord, and his punishment was to have his eyes put out he was blinded. If the tapestry artists were using an illustrated example of the death of King Zedekiah, then it may just be that Harold getting his eye put out was borrowed from this artistic source.

The real stumbling block is that no other contemporary source mentions an arrow in the eye. For instance, William of Poitiers, who provides a very detailed account of the battle, simply says: "the report 'Harold is dead' flew around the battlefield." The source that William of Poitiers used was the *Carmen*, which we now think was made before the spring of 1068, so it's *the* most contemporary source of all. The song talks about Harold getting killed by a Norman death squad: six or so men, led by William, singled Harold out and hacked him down.

Here, you're weighing an embroidery against a poem. There's a lot of artistic licence there. There were tens of thousands of arrows loosed that day, so maybe Harold *did* get an arrow in the eye.

But our most closely contemporary narrative source says he was done in by a dedicated death squad. The only other thing I think could strengthen this as a more likely scenario is that William the Conqueror's chaplain, William of Poitiers, doesn't repeat that story. Poitiers wrote with a copy of the *Carmen* in front of him, parrotting bits he liked and challenging parts that he didn't but he makes no mention of a Norman death squad. You could see that as a silent endorsement of the *Carmen*'s version of events; that Poitiers didn't go into any of those details because it made William appear less than chivalrous. ⊙

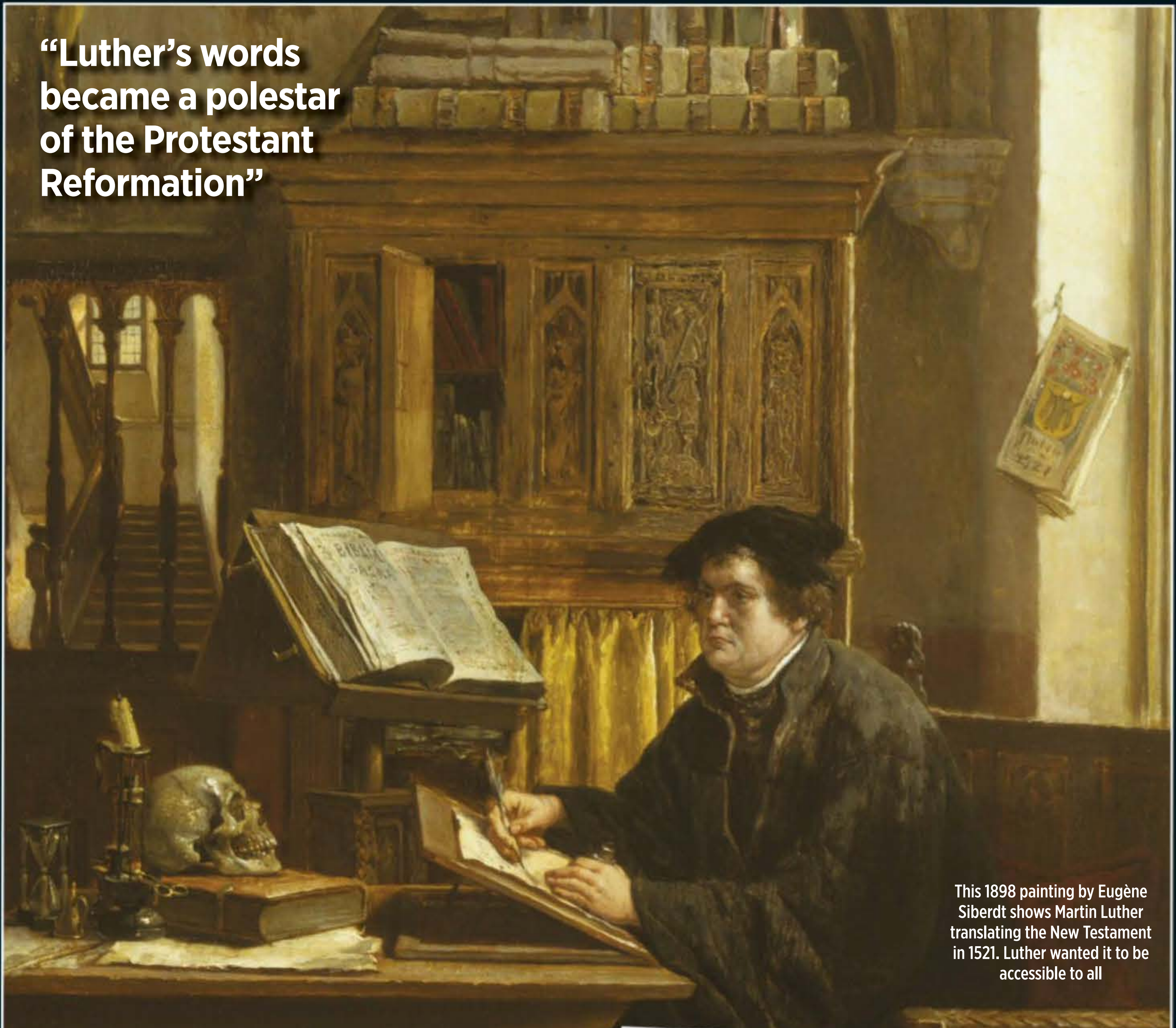
MARC MORRIS is a historian, author and broadcaster who specialises in the Middle Ages. His publications include *William I: England's Conqueror* (Penguin Books, 2016) and *The Norman Conquest* (Windmill Books, 2013)

GET HOOKED

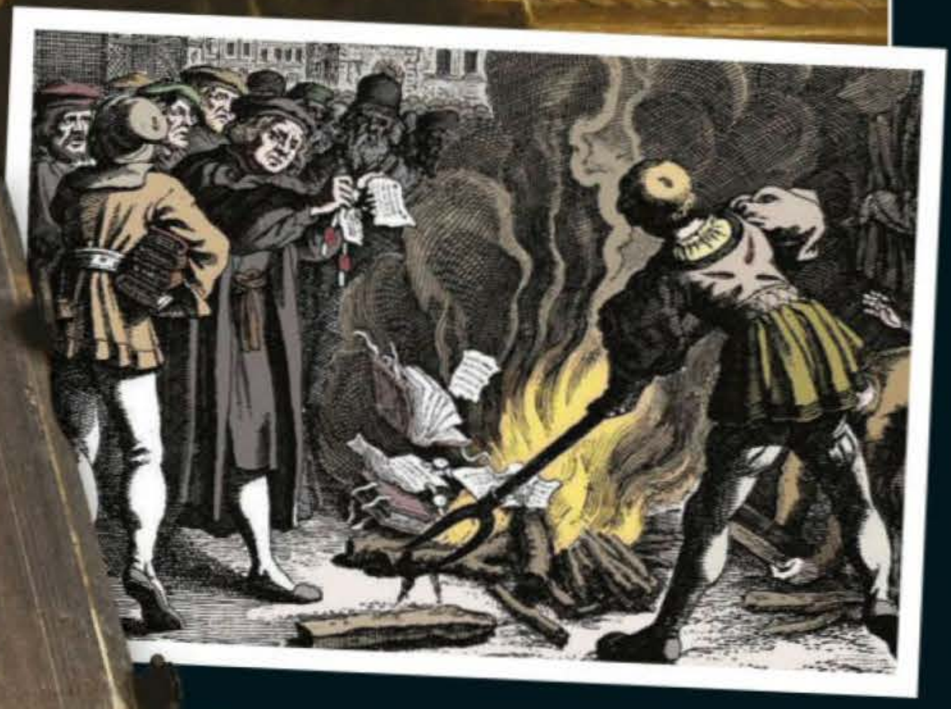
LISTEN

Marc Morris discusses the Norman Conquest on an episode of the *HistoryExtra* 'Everything you wanted to know about…' podcast series. Listen for free at *historyextra.com/normans-guide*

“Luther’s words became a polestar of the Protestant Reformation”



This 1898 painting by Eugène Siberdt shows Martin Luther translating the New Testament in 1521. Luther wanted it to be accessible to all



ABOVE: Luther burned the Papal Bull giving him an ultimatum to recant his writings

LEFT: The complete Bible, translated by Luther – it is known as the Elector’s Bible

SPOTLIGHT ON

HOW MARTIN LUTHER LOST CONTROL OF THE REFORMATION

When the 16th-century German theologian published his *95 Theses*, he sparked the Protestant Reformation in Europe – but the movement soon outgrew him, writes **Jonny Wilkes**

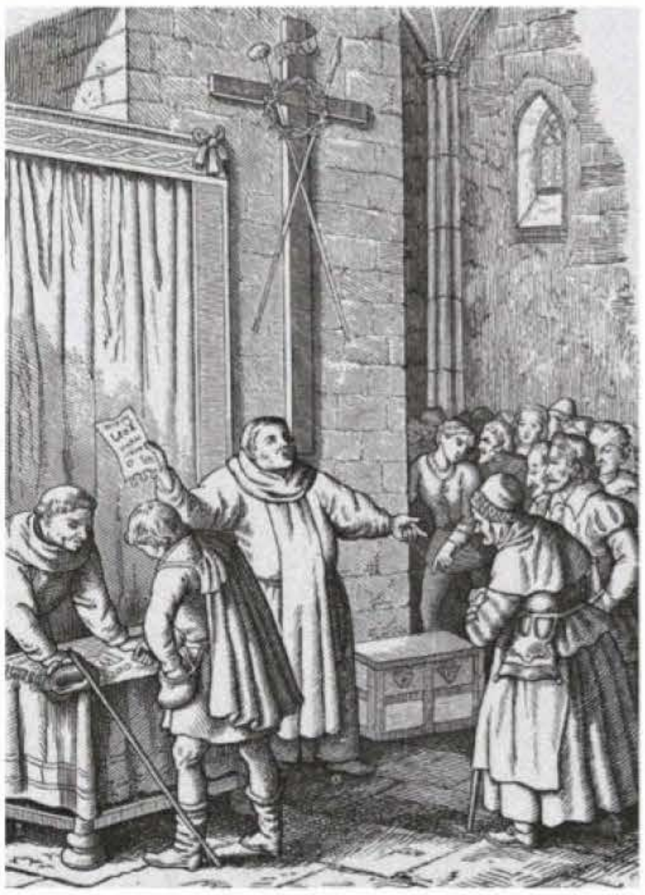
One summer's day in 1505, a promising student named Martin Luther was walking back to the University of Erfurt when he got caught in a fierce thunderstorm. Lightning struck nearby, and the pious young man from Eisleben, Saxony – terrified at this sign from God – cried out a vow. If spared from the almighty tempest, he would stop studying law and become a monk. The storm didn't harm him, and so the 21-year-old kept his word – and ultimately changed the course of Christianity.

Later that year, Luther joined an Augustinian order in Erfurt (in modern-day Germany, then part of the Holy Roman Empire). His father, Hans, who made his money from mining and smelting, had driven his son's education in the hopes of making him a lawyer. Instead, Luther chose a life of poverty and devotion. He was ordained within two years.

Despite Luther's commitment to his calling, he struggled constantly with his faith. A 1510 trip to Rome had exacerbated these religious concerns; he was profoundly disheartened by the corruption and vacuum of spirituality he had observed there and vowed never to return. What seems to have upset Luther most was the clergy's money-making practice of selling indulgences – paying the Church to absolve one's sins to reduce the time spent in Purgatory before being admitted into Heaven.

THE SPARK OF CHANGE

Luther's anger at the sale of indulgences inadvertently propelled him to the forefront of Christian thought. On 31 October 1517, he unveiled his *Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences*, better known as his *95 Theses*. According to legend, he nailed them to the door of his city's church in a public challenge to the Catholic Church, but it's more likely that he sent the propositions in a letter to the Archbishop of Mainz to spark a debate. The contents of his *95 Theses*, Luther knew, were highly provocative. One point reads: "Why does not the pope, whose wealth today is greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build the basilica of St Peter with his own money rather than with the money of poor believers?"



The Catholic practice of selling indulgences (*shown above*) was abhorred by Martin Luther and prompted his *95 Theses*

The *95 Theses* crystallised two guiding tenets of Luther's beliefs: the Bible must be the central religious authority; and people will be saved through faith and the grace of God alone, not by worldly deeds or rigid compliance to church dogma. While not entirely new ideas, Luther planted them at the right moment to take root.

The advent of the printing press meant his writings – not only the *95 Theses*, but the numerous works that followed – spread across Europe within months. His words became a polestar of the Protestant Reformation. Challenging the established teachings of the Catholic Church, however, put Luther at odds with the most powerful institution in Europe, and in 1518 he was summoned to meet with Cardinal Cajetan in Augsburg. Much to the papal legate's anger, Luther refused to retract anything.

The Church continued to pressure Luther into renouncing his statements, but to no avail: Luther even burned an ultimatum to recant on a public bonfire. So, on 3 January 1521, Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther. That April, the reformer answered another summons by appearing at the Diet of Worms, an assembly of the Holy Roman Empire, where yet again he refused to recant: "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen," he said. The resulting Edict of Worms declared Luther to be a "notorious heretic", branded his followers as outlaws and proclaimed that his books should be burned.

LUTHERANISM IN NAME ONLY?

Luther went into hiding – protected by Frederick III, elector of Saxony – but he returned to Wittenberg the next year. Despite his absence, Lutheranism was developing as a branch of Protestantism, although not all the changes pleased him. He disagreed vehemently with more radical elements of the Reformation and some of its other leading figures, including the pastor Huldrych Zwingli and the scholar Erasmus. He also denounced the peasantry during the Peasants' War (1524–25), a mass uprising in Germany inspired by his words.

Although Luther eschewed the spotlight, in 1525 he still caused a scandal when he wed Katharina von Bora, a disgraced nun. They lived in Luther's (now emptied) old Augustinian monastery and had six children. Luther continued to write, although he grew more irascible with age, calling the pope the Antichrist and penning anti-Semitic tracts.

In 1534, he published arguably his greatest achievement: the Bible, translated into German. Its popularity helped more people learn to read and also further challenged the authority of church leaders. No longer did worshippers need to rely on Latin-speaking priests to relay the word of God: they could now read it themselves, in the vernacular. It would be his final gift to the Reformation. After years of ill health, Luther died on 18 February 1546, aged 62. He was buried in Wittenberg's church – on whose door he had allegedly nailed his *95 Theses* nearly 30 years earlier. ⊙

BBC WORLD SERVICE

Martin Luther and his *95 Theses* are discussed on an episode of *Witness History* on the BBC World Service.
bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csvtwq

GETTY IMAGES X4

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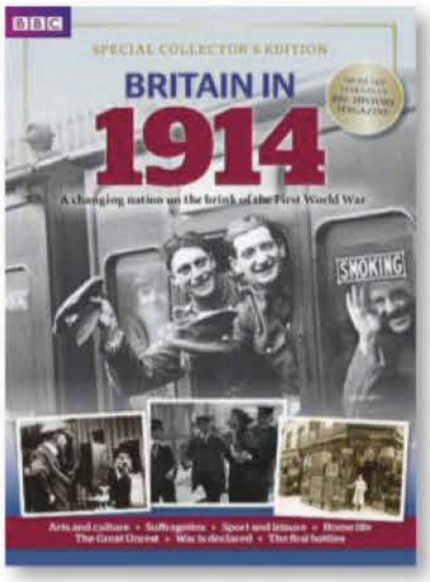

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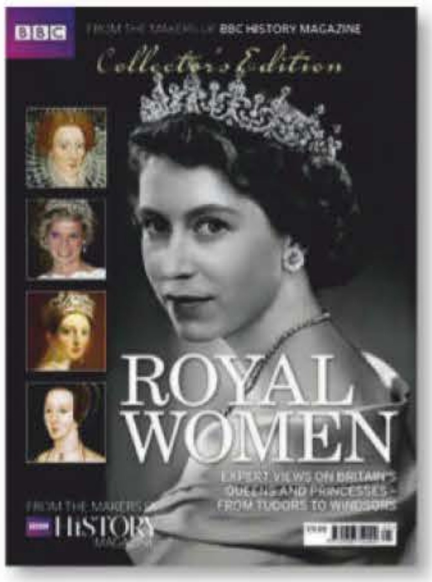

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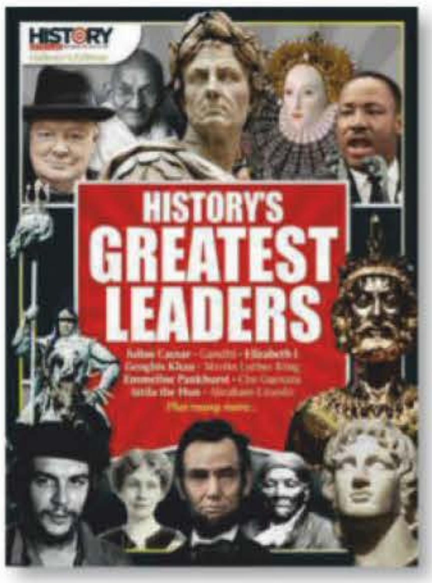

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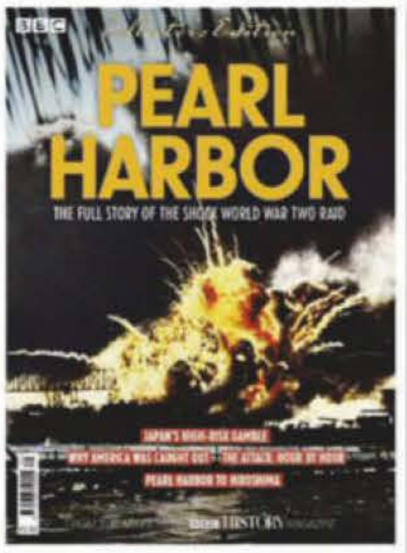

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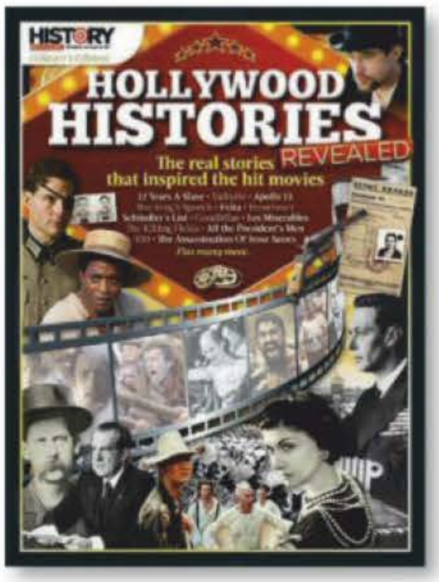

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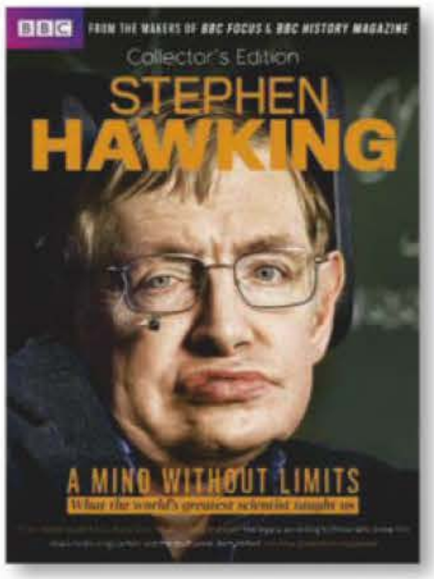

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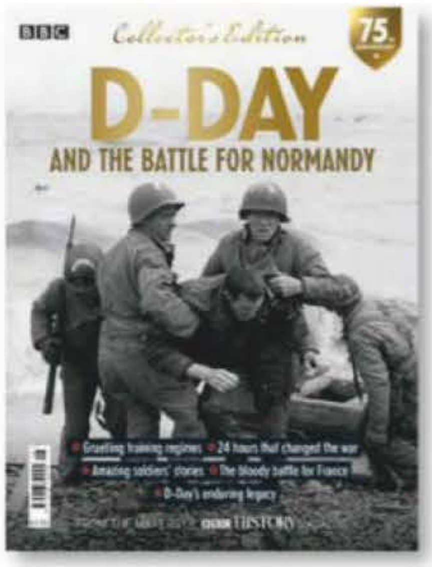

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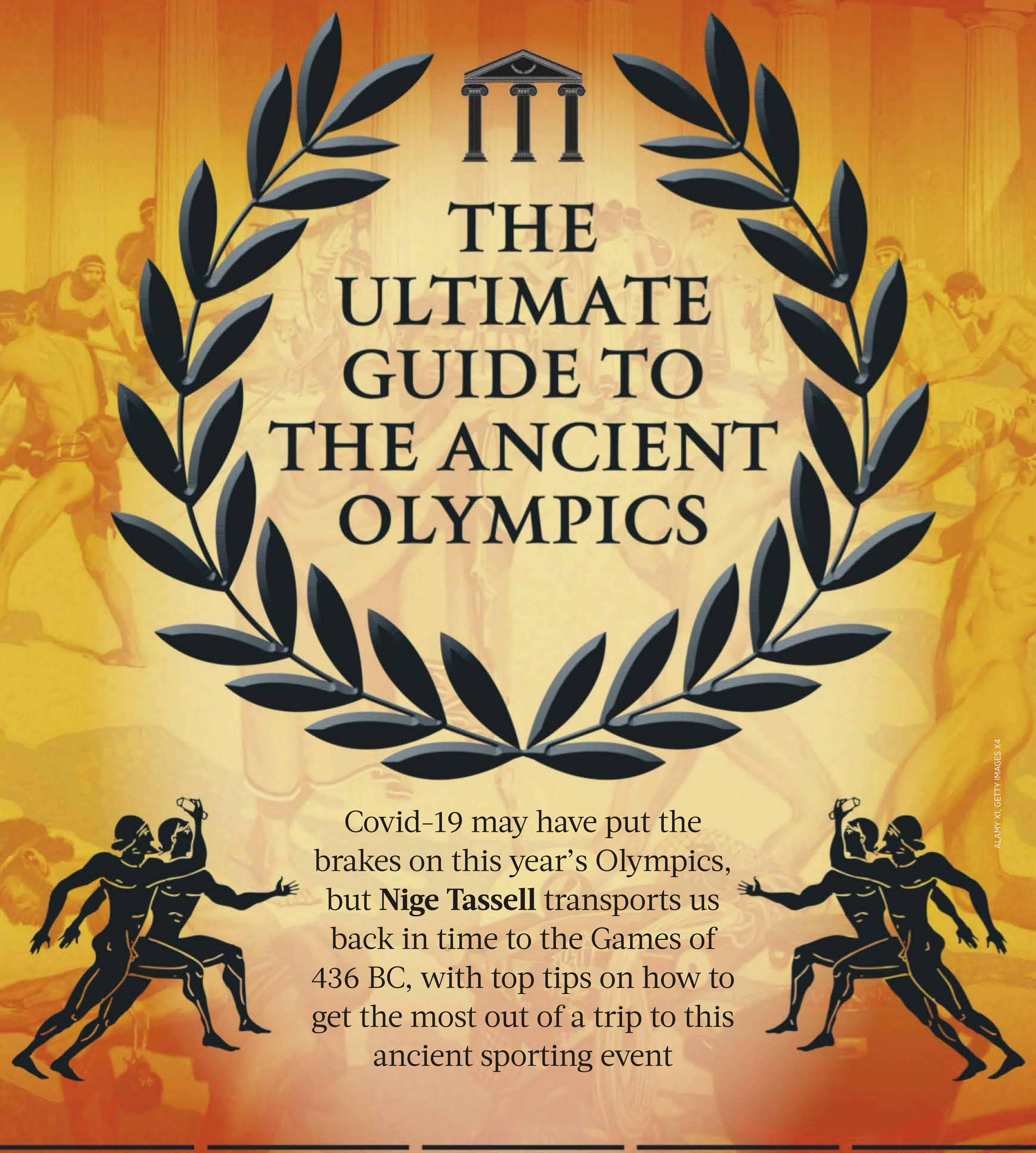


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE ANCIENT OLYMPICS

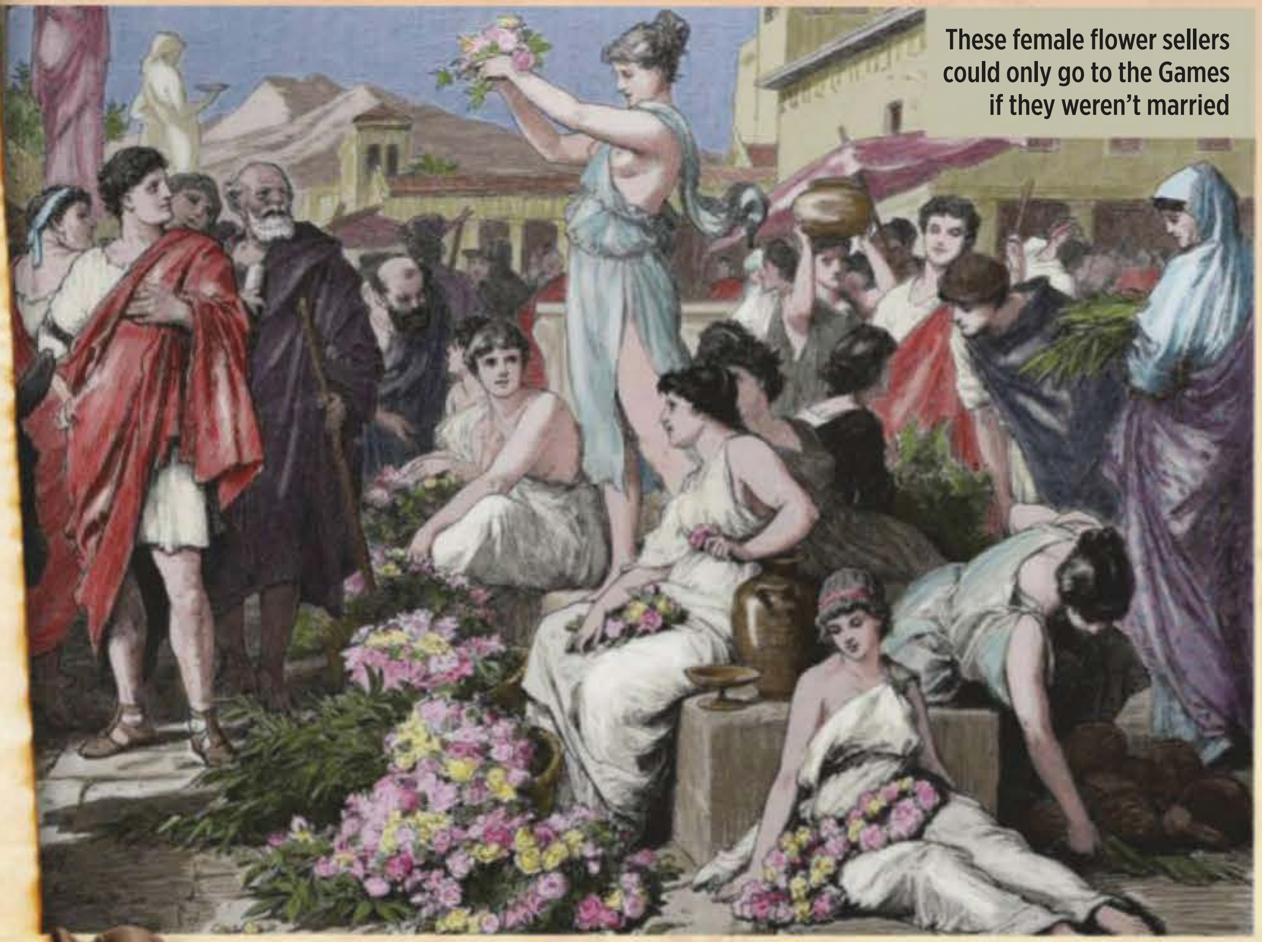
Covid-19 may have put the brakes on this year's Olympics, but **Nige Tassell** transports us back in time to the Games of 436 BC, with top tips on how to get the most out of a trip to this ancient sporting event

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X4

HOW TO GET THERE

Your fellow spectators will have travelled from all over the Mediterranean basin, so be prepared to encounter heavy traffic (and expect delays) on your way to Olympia. Around 50,000 people will be making their way to the site – which, being a religious sanctuary rather than a fully functioning city, offers little in the way of infrastructure. Many revellers will be forced to travel through warzones and rival Greek states to reach Olympia. While the Olympic truce is theoretically in place for the duration of the Games, ongoing battles may well not be suspended in certain areas and regions. This means there's a reasonable chance of encountering fighting as you make your way to the Games, so take the utmost care while travelling.

And remember: no married women will be permitted to enter Olympia during the Games. It's men and unmarried women only!



These female flower sellers could only go to the Games if they weren't married

DID YOU KNOW?

ALL DRESSED UP

A married woman named Kallipateira disguised herself as a man to watch her son, Peisirodos, in action at the Games. She accidentally revealed her gender when she hopped over the barrier after he won his bout.

An aerial view of ancient Olympia. The site offered little accommodation

> "Plenty of spectators chance their arm and sleep under the stars"

WHERE TO STAY

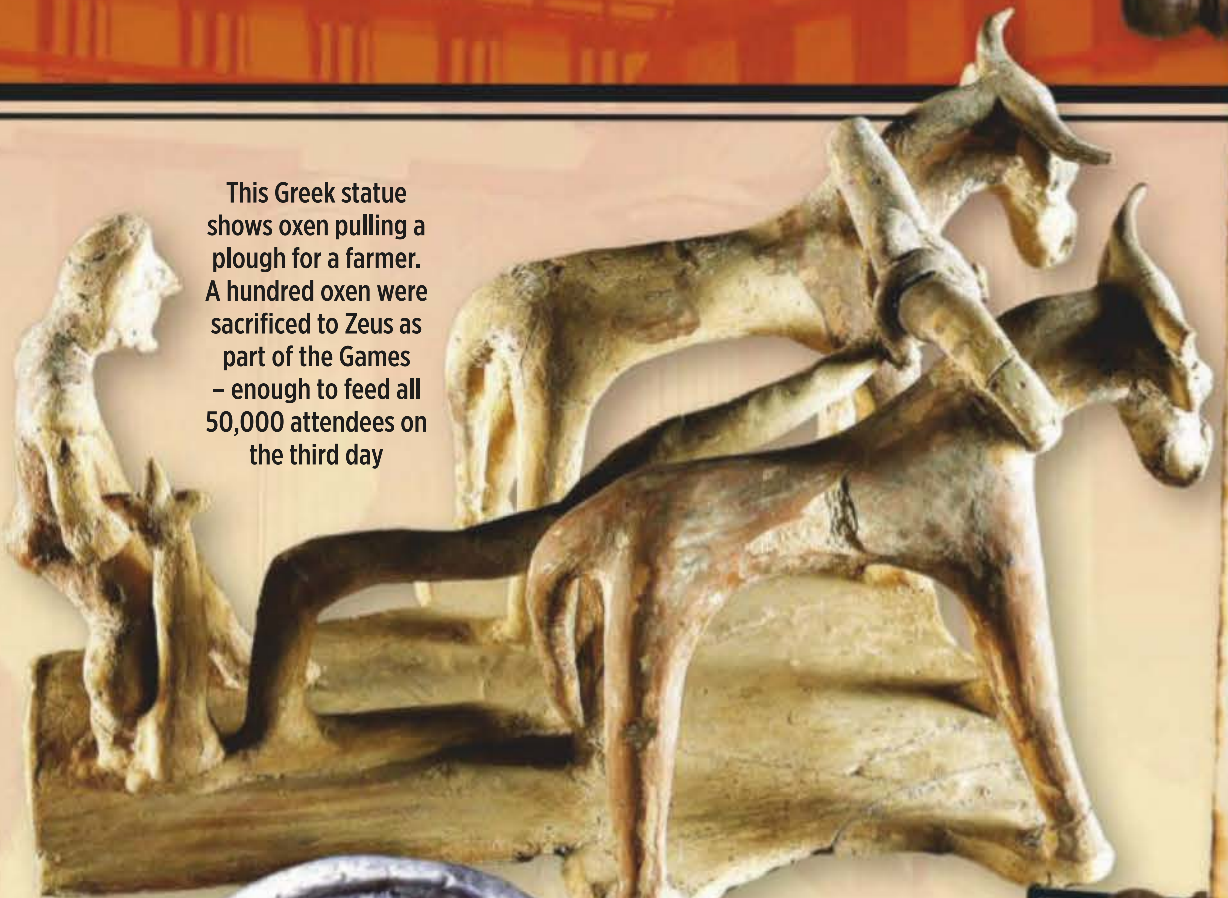
Unfortunately, Olympia currently only boasts a single hotel – the Leonidaion – which, while being beyond the budget of most Olympic spectators, also tends to reserve its rooms for dignitaries and officials. The hiring of tents and canvas pavilions is possible, but again these prove very popular, as well as being rather costly. Most spectators bring their own tents to camp in, but there are also plenty who chance their arm and try to find comfortable patches of ground to lay their heads on, sleeping under the stars.

GETTY IMAGES X7, ALAMY X1

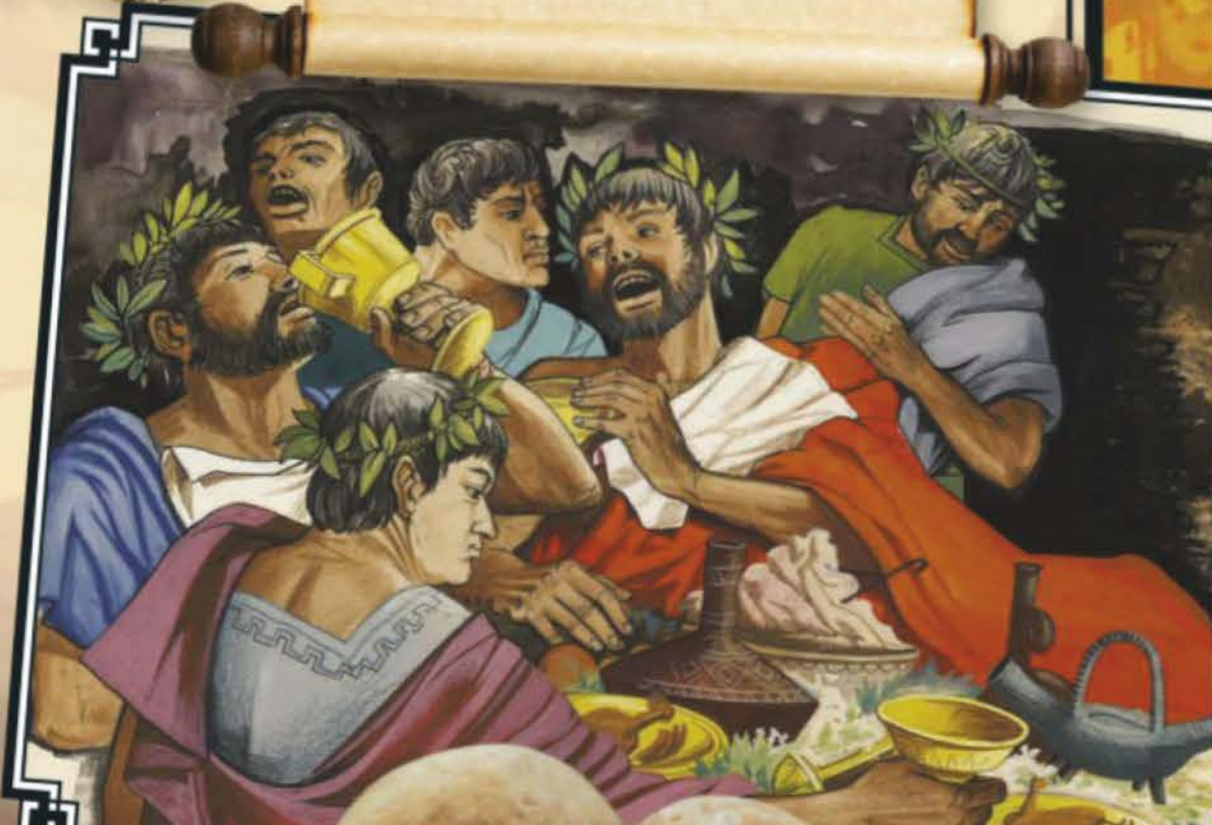
WHAT TO EAT

All manner of food is available in the grounds outside the stadium and the hippodrome, but beware of unscrupulous vendors who can charge extortionate prices. Make sure you bring enough disposable cash with you to avoid going hungry.

That being said, do leave some room in your stomach for the third day of the Games, when a hundred oxen are traditionally sacrificed as an offering to the god of sky and thunder, Zeus. This day – scheduled around the full moon – effectively becomes a mass barbecue. Although some of the meat is reserved for Zeus, the rest is distributed among the 50,000 spectators, and no one goes hungry.



This Greek statue shows oxen pulling a plough for a farmer. A hundred oxen were sacrificed to Zeus as part of the Games – enough to feed all 50,000 attendees on the third day



Boisterous feasting (*right*) was an option – if you brought enough coin to weather the eyewatering prices

Fruits and cheese were available in abundance; and they certainly would have been more appetising than these clay renditions

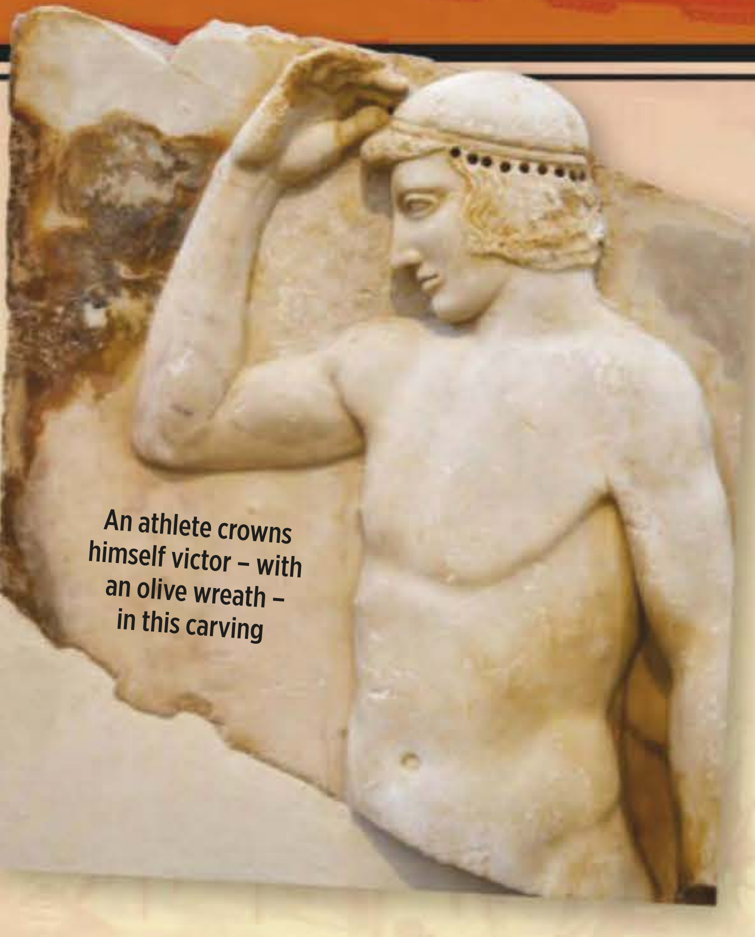
WHAT TO SEE

Of course, no one comes to the Games for the accommodation or the catering: everyone is here for the sports! So when and where can you see all your favourite events?

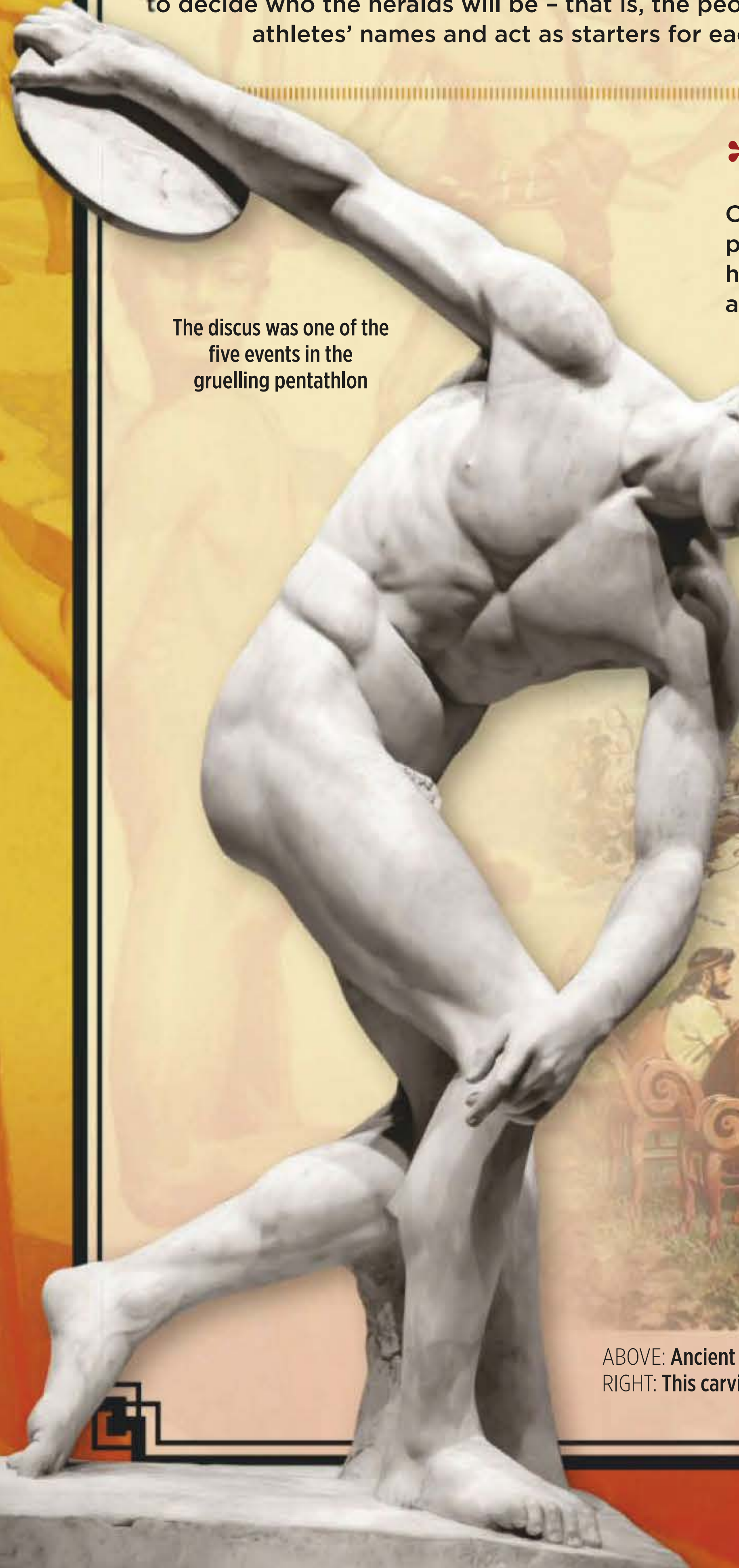
✻ DAY ONE ✻

The first day is largely a ceremonial occasion. It's the time when the athletes make their first appearances, chiefly to take the oaths that demand they respect the rules – a tradition that has ensured the Games is the finest multi-sport event across the known world. And it's not just the athletes swearing their allegiance to fair play: the judges also have to pledge to keep the event free of corruption.

Once all the oaths have been sworn, contests are then held to decide which trumpet players will have the honour of serenading the Games. Then it's time to decide who the heralds will be – that is, the people who will announce the athletes' names and act as starters for each race and fight.



An athlete crowns himself victor – with an olive wreath – in this carving

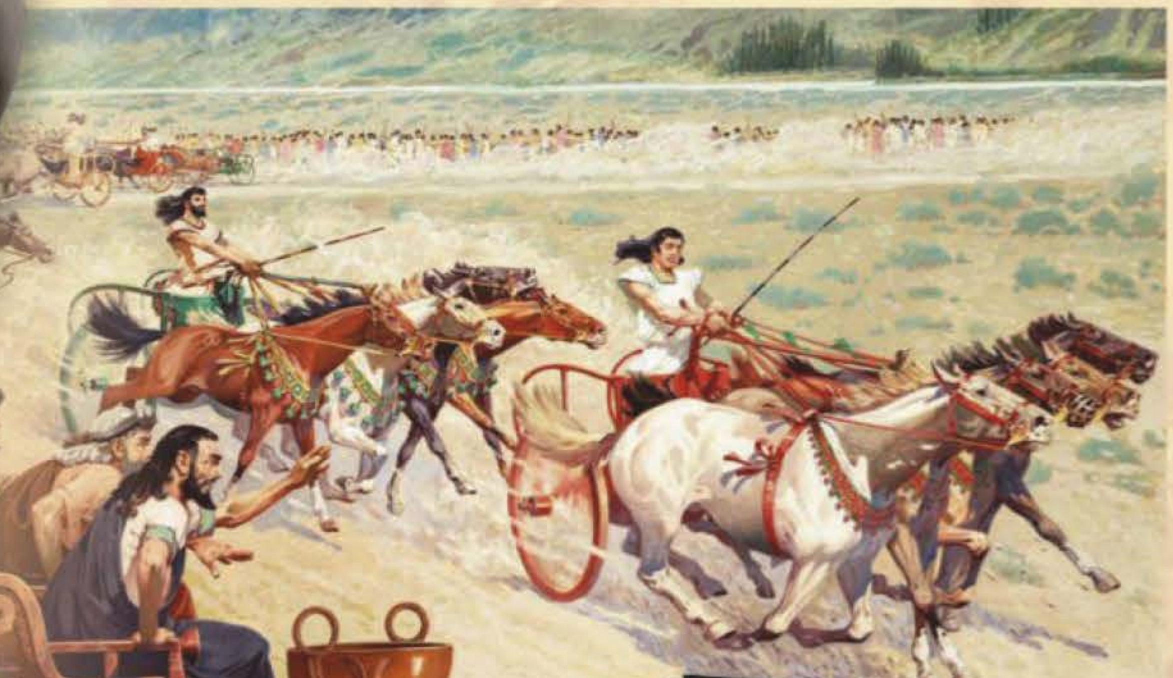


The discus was one of the five events in the gruelling pentathlon

✻ DAY TWO ✻

Over in the hippodrome, the ever-popular equestrian sports kick off the day's proceedings. There are all manner of events, including the *quadriga* (a thrilling, high-velocity race where four horses pull each chariot), mounted horse races and chariot races for younger horses. But remember: however skilful the chariot drivers or jockeys show themselves to be, the real winners are the owners of the horses. After all, they're the ones who are presented with the winners' spoils.

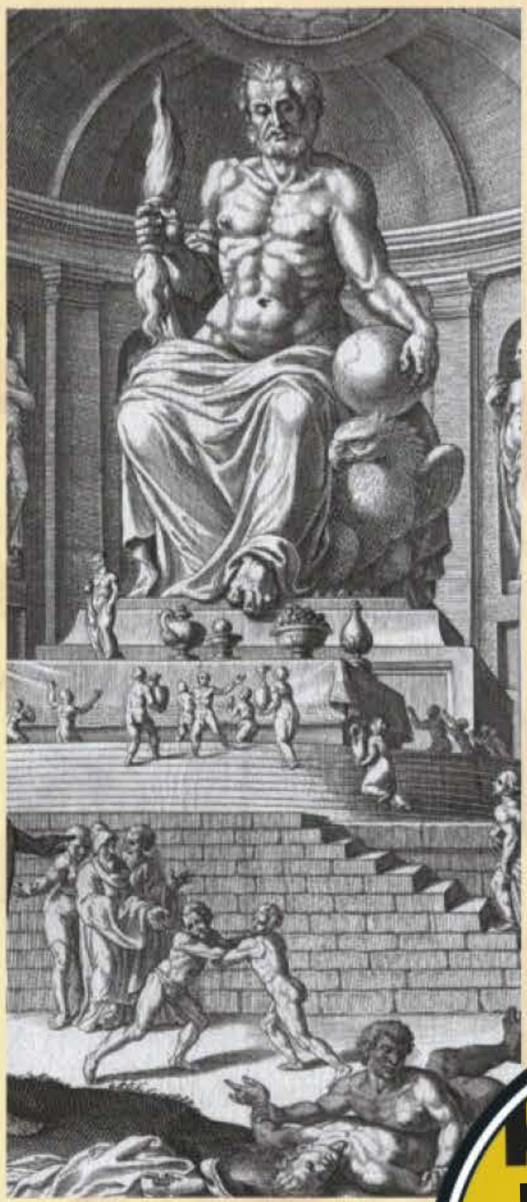
In the afternoon, the famed pentathlon takes place in the stadium – the ultimate measure of an athlete's fitness, physique and sporting ability. Over the span of a few hours, competitors take on five different events: discus, long jump, javelin, running and wrestling. And whoever is crowned champion will hold on to their title for the next four years.



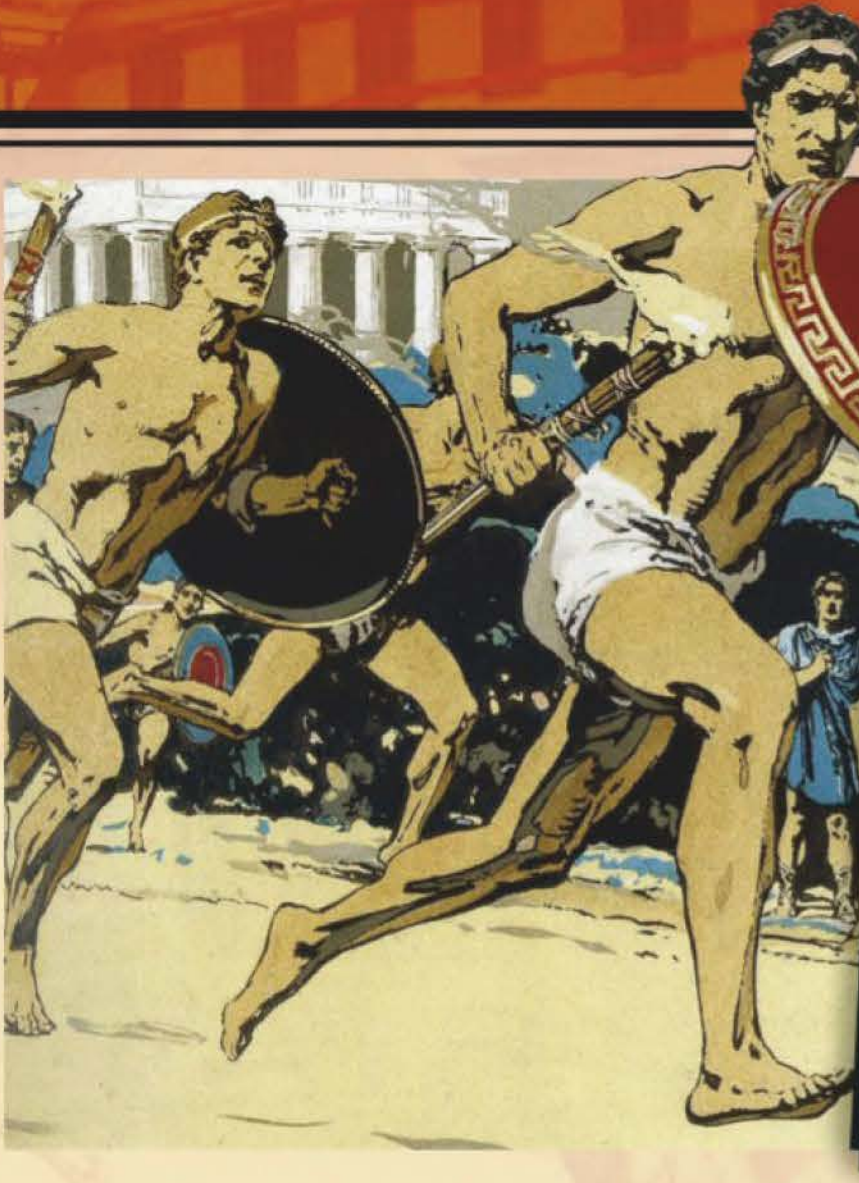
ABOVE: **Ancient Greeks take part in a chariot race called the quadriga**
RIGHT: **This carving depicts two ancient Greeks wrestling each other**

✻ DAY THREE ✻

This is effectively a day of rest and general merriment, with no sporting events taking place. Instead, the sacrifice of a hundred oxen is the main item on the agenda – or should that be menu? Timed around the full moon, some of the oxen meat is offered to Zeus, while the remainder is shared by all those attending.

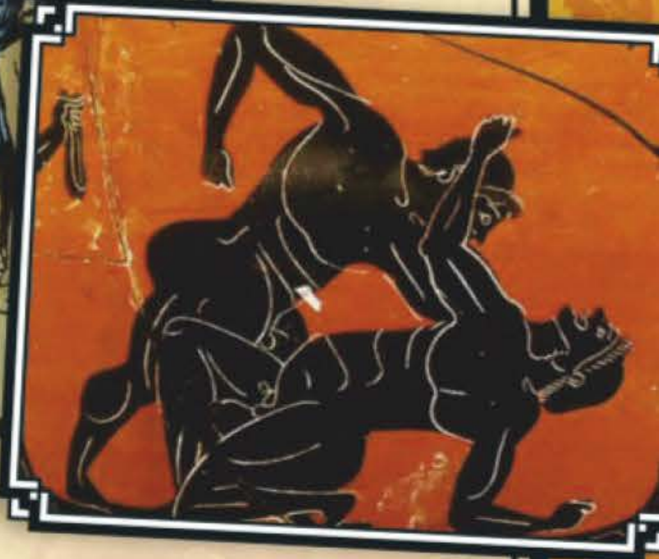


The grand statue of Zeus at Olympia. The god was honoured at the Games with a ritual sacrifice



LEFT: Athletes battle it out in the torch race, one of several foot races held on day four

BELOW: Two athletes take part in pankration, a particularly violent combat sport



✻ DAY FOUR ✻

Today, the various foot races get underway in the stadium. The *stadion* race is one of the more explosive, and thus most popular, events: an intense sprint held over a single length of the stadium – a distance of approximately 192 metres. Will Krison, the pride of Himera, win a fourth crown in what's likely to be his final Olympiad, or will Theopompos from Thessaly take a maiden triumph?

The *diaulos* sees competitors covering twice that distance, while the *dolichos* are races that cover longer distances (anywhere between seven and 24 laps of the stadium). Another of the more popular events is the race in armour, where athletes race against one another while carrying shields and wearing helmets and greaves.

After lunch, the combat sports take place. These include boxing and wrestling, as well as *pankration* – an event that's close to a combination of the two. The crowds are always large for these events, so make sure to arrive early to get the best vantage point. But those of a delicate constitution should be warned: these events are not for the squeamish. The pankration is particularly brutal, with very few rules getting in the way of the competitors. The only restrictions are that fighters mustn't bite their opponents, gouge their eyes, stick fingers up their nose or aim for the genitals. Other than that, anything goes!

DID YOU KNOW?

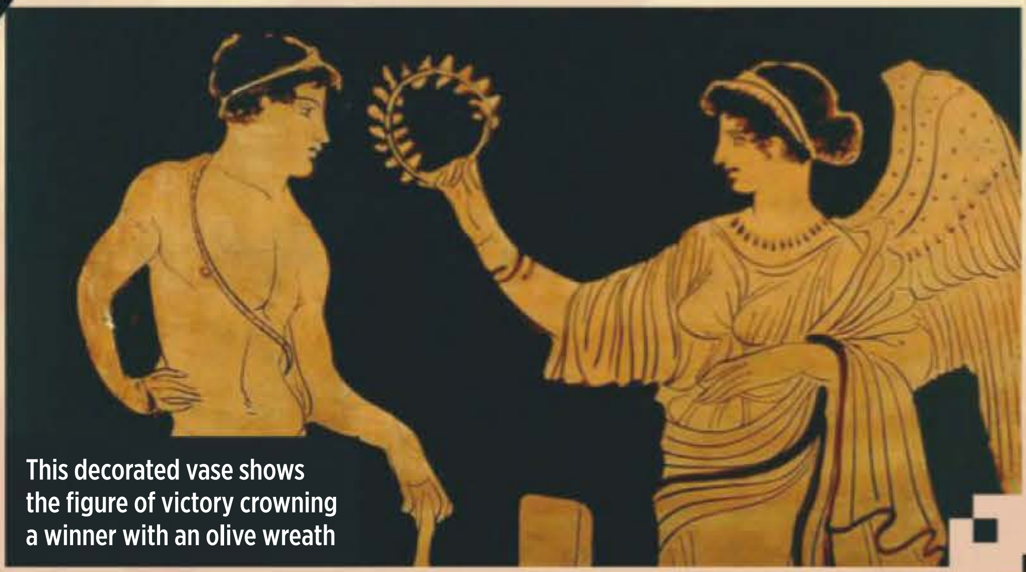
LOSERS, WEEPERS

As there was no reward for second place, competitors had to be in peak physical condition to maximise their chances of winning. They undertook extreme exercise regimes, stuck to controlled diets and abstained from bodily pleasures.

✻ DAY FIVE ✻

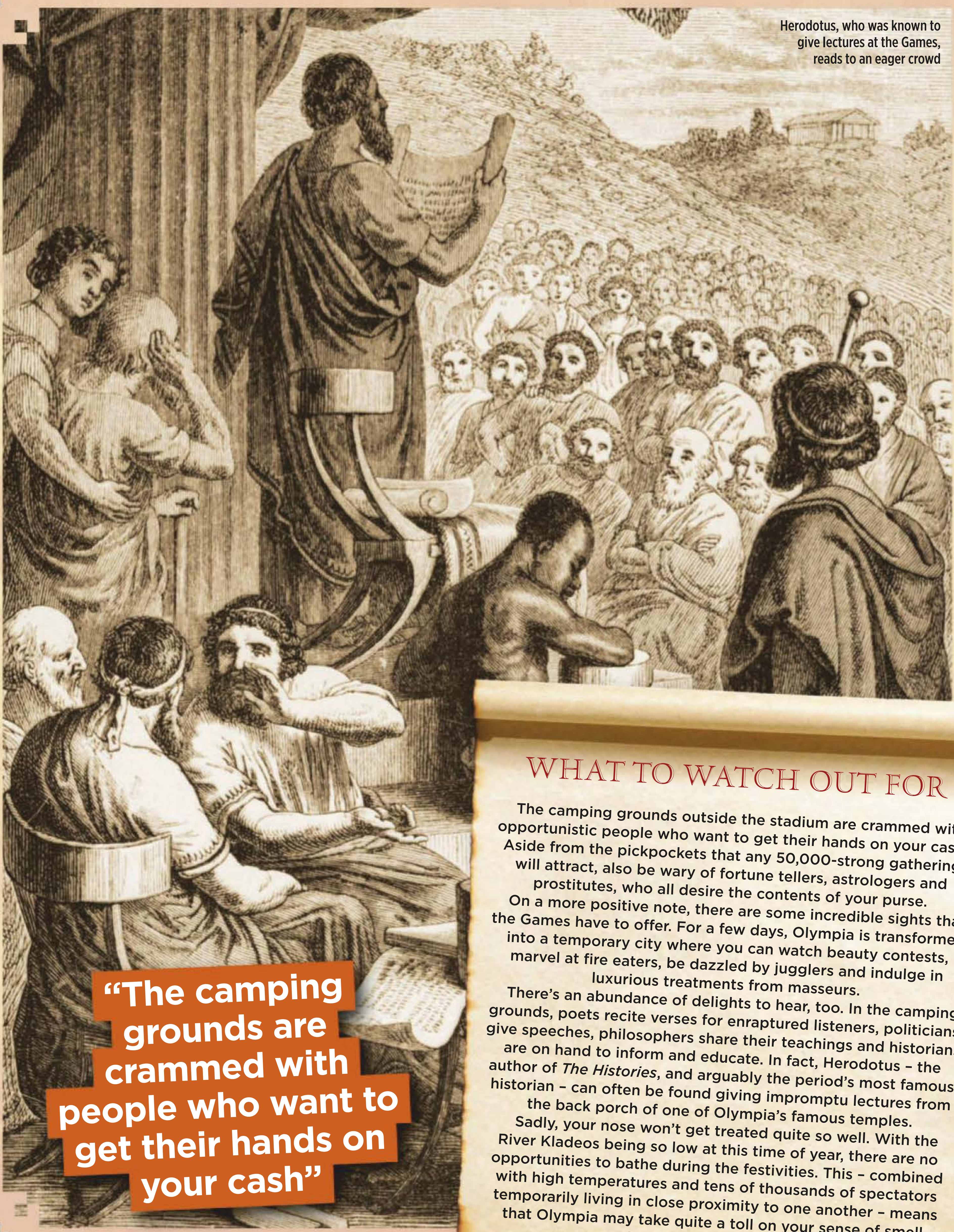
The final day of the Games gives all those present the opportunity to salute the champions by showering them with applause. The winner of each event is presented with the *taeria* (the red woollen ribbon that denotes an Olympic champion), and they are also crowned with a ceremonial wreath of olive leaves.

The remainder of the day is devoted to celebrating the displays of sporting endeavour and glory that attendees have witnessed over the past few days. The Games' winners are invited to an exclusive banquet that's also attended by all the judges, as well as assorted politicians and dignitaries.



This decorated vase shows the figure of victory crowning a winner with an olive wreath

ALEKSANDR ZYKOV/FLICKR X1, ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X5



Herodotus, who was known to give lectures at the Games, reads to an eager crowd

> **"The camping grounds are crammed with people who want to get their hands on your cash"**

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR

The camping grounds outside the stadium are crammed with opportunistic people who want to get their hands on your cash. Aside from the pickpockets that any 50,000-strong gathering will attract, also be wary of fortune tellers, astrologers and prostitutes, who all desire the contents of your purse.

On a more positive note, there are some incredible sights that the Games have to offer. For a few days, Olympia is transformed into a temporary city where you can watch beauty contests, marvel at fire eaters, be dazzled by jugglers and indulge in luxurious treatments from masseurs.

There's an abundance of delights to hear, too. In the camping grounds, poets recite verses for enraptured listeners, politicians give speeches, philosophers share their teachings and historians are on hand to inform and educate. In fact, Herodotus – the author of *The Histories*, and arguably the period's most famous historian – can often be found giving impromptu lectures from the back porch of one of Olympia's famous temples.

Sadly, your nose won't get treated quite so well. With the River Kladeos being so low at this time of year, there are no opportunities to bathe during the festivities. This – combined with high temperatures and tens of thousands of spectators temporarily living in close proximity to one another – means that Olympia may take quite a toll on your sense of smell. You have been warned!

GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X1

TOP TIPS

The Games take place in high summer, making heatstroke a very real prospect for all attendees. It's crucial, then, that you rehydrate as much as possible while at Olympia to avoid becoming seriously ill. But owing to the RIver Kladeos's low levels, drinking water is at a premium. It's hoped that an aqueduct and a fountain will be constructed at some point in the future to provide fresh drinking water to Olympia. For now, though, it's just the resinated wine that flows fast.

Shade around Olympia is also hard to come by, so if you do manage to find space under the leaves of one of the olive trees around the site (from which the winning athletes' garlands are fashioned), try to stay in situ for as long as possible.

Even without the scorching temperatures and lack of liquid refreshments, standing upright for as much as 16 hours a day to watch the action can also take its toll. Very few seats can be found in the stadium, and those that do exist are the preserve of dignitaries and politicians. Instead, you can maximise your general wellbeing by taking the weight off your legs from time to time and sitting on any available patch of ground.

This fifth century BC Greek vase depicts a runner carrying a torch – sacred fires were kept burning at Olympia's temples

DID YOU KNOW?

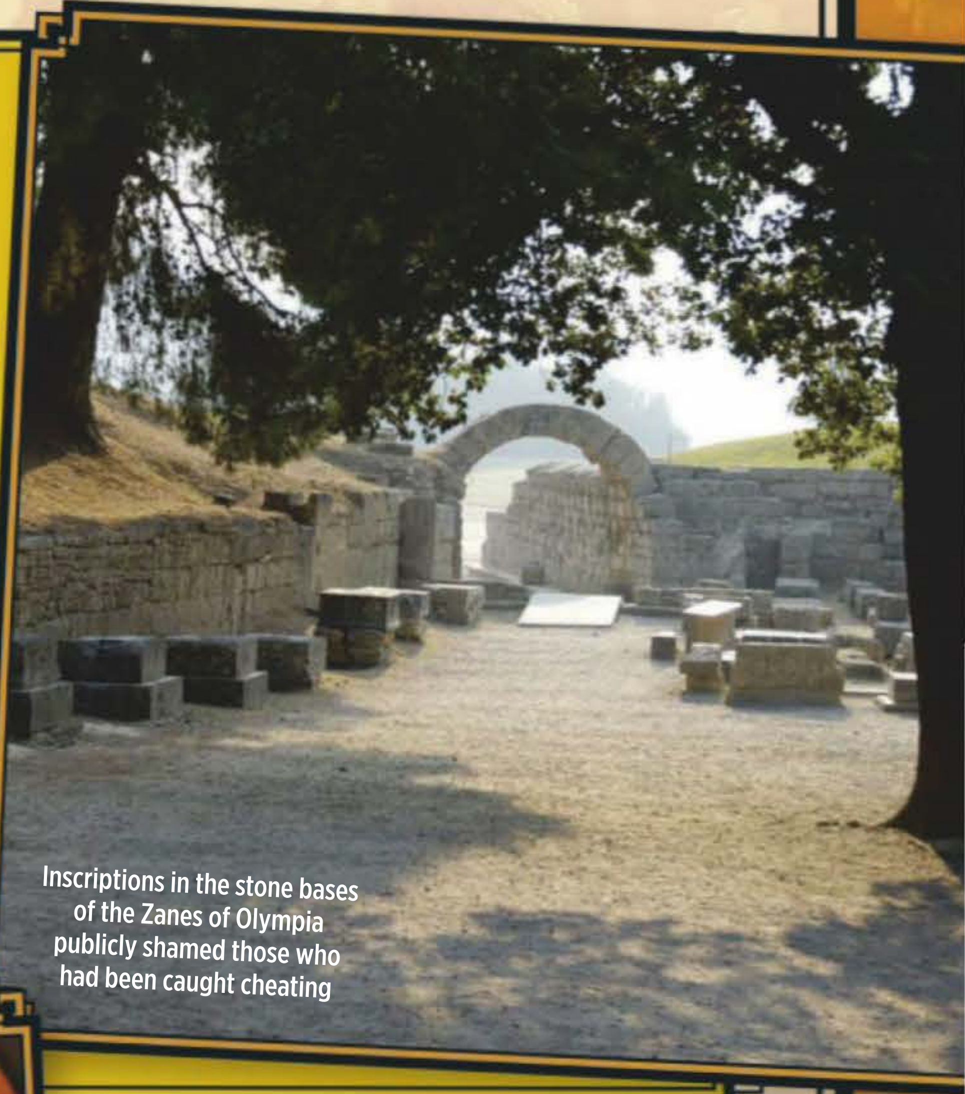
LAW AND DISORDER

Arguments were common at the Games, and occasionally fights descended into physical violence. To ensure these brawls didn't spiral out of control, hired police patrolled Olympia to maintain order, armed with whips.

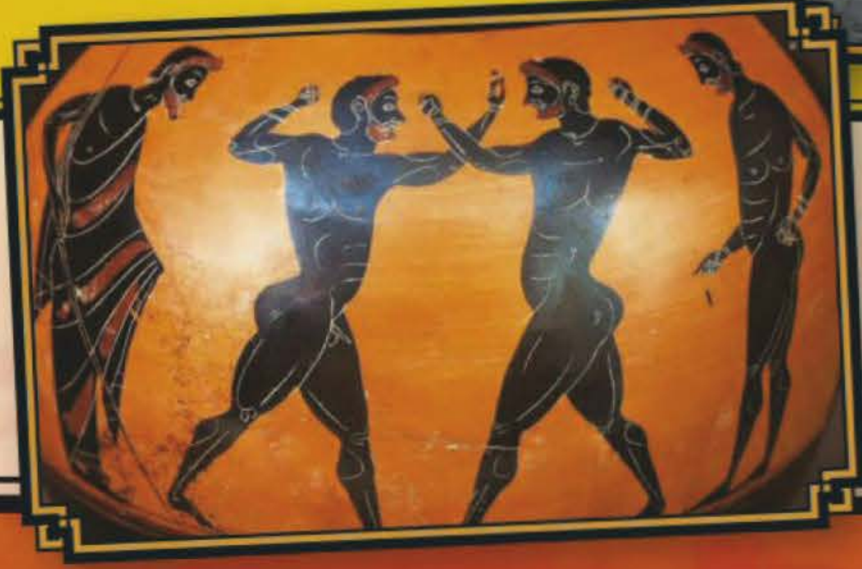
CHEATING IN THE ANCIENT GAMES

Although the judges didn't have any sophisticated technologies at their disposal to catch those bending the rules, they were extremely strict – and they could be merciless and brutal in the punishments they administered. Take the judges overseeing the foot races, for instance, who dished out corporal punishment as a way to keep competitors on the straight and narrow. Even for comparatively slight misdemeanours, such as committing a false start, they weren't averse to striking any guilty runners with whips during races – and bear in mind that athletes were naked in many events.

Such measures were necessary to deter cheating, which wasn't uncommon. In the boxing competitions, for instance, there were several notable cases of boxers taking bribes and deliberately losing their bouts. There were other ways of naming and shaming miscreants, too. Fines were dished out for the more serious offences, with the money raised funding the construction of the Zanes of Olympia, a series of bronze statues of Zeus. The plinths that these statues stood on were inscribed with the names of the fine-paying cheats – a permanent reminder of their crimes. The statues were located along a passageway that took competitors into the stadium, offering a cautionary lesson to anyone who hoped to gain an unfair advantage.



Inscriptions in the stone bases of the Zanes of Olympia publicly shamed those who had been caught cheating



This amphora shows two athletes boxing. Some would cheat at these matches by accepting bribes and purposely losing their bouts

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

Greg Jenner and guests take a trip to the Ancient Olympics in an episode of the BBC Radio 4 podcast *You're Dead to Me*.
bbc.co.uk/programmes/p085v4zm

Sergeant Stubby captured the hearts of Americans for his wartime heroics, and he took part in many parades

SERGEANT STUBBY

AMERICA'S MOST DECORATED WAR DOG

Sergeant Stubby's World War I record earned him a stack of medals and accolades. **Rachel Dinning** traces the pooch's meteoric rise from Connecticut stray to American hero

Although Sergeant Stubby was eventually bedecked in military medals and beloved by Americans, his start in life was far from glamorous. Nobody knows exactly when Stubby was born, but it's thought to have been during the first half of World War I. He was a dog of uncertain breed, described in early news stories as either a bull terrier or a Boston terrier, with a short stature, barrel shape and friendly temperament. Until 1917 it's thought that Stubby wandered the streets of New Haven, Connecticut, scrounging for scraps of food. But this was no ordinary stray. Just a few years later – following the end of World War I – he was recognised as the most decorated dog in American history.

Stubby's fortunes had changed in July 1917, when he began hanging around a group of soldiers belonging to the 102nd Infantry Regiment as they trained in the grounds of Yale University. One of the men, a 25-year-old private named Robert Conroy, took a shine to the young dog and began to take care of him, naming him 'Stubby' in reference to his stature and little tail.

Although the US military didn't yet have an official 'military working dog' programme, Stubby's instincts and charm made him a firm favourite with the men of the regiment, who taught him how to raise his paw 'in salute'. By the time the unit left for France, Private Conroy had become so devoted to his new furry friend that he stowed him on the ship. When a commanding officer discovered Stubby's presence, the dog apparently responded by saluting him. The officer was reportedly rendered speechless by the gesture, and the incident secured Stubby's place as the official mascot of the Yankee division.

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X1

FIVE MORE FIGHTING ANIMALS

Sergeant Stubby wasn't the only animal to prove himself on the battlefield – these five creatures also heroically stepped up during wartime

WAR HORSES World War I & World War II

▲ Horses were invaluable to the war effort, with scores of them dying on the battlefield or from the terrible conditions that they suffered through. Here, mounted British soldiers in North Africa charge through a smoke screen c1940.

DASTY War in Afghanistan

▲ War dogs have been used in recent conflicts, too, including the war in Afghanistan. A Belgian Malinois named Dasty worked in Afghanistan and was awarded the rank of sergeant for her valiant efforts. Here, she is resting alongside a soldier at an airfield.

NANCY World War I

▲ The springbok was the 4th South African Infantry Regiment's mascot during World War I. She's the only animal in South African military history to have been given full funeral honours and interred in an Allied war cemetery.

CARRIER PIGEONS

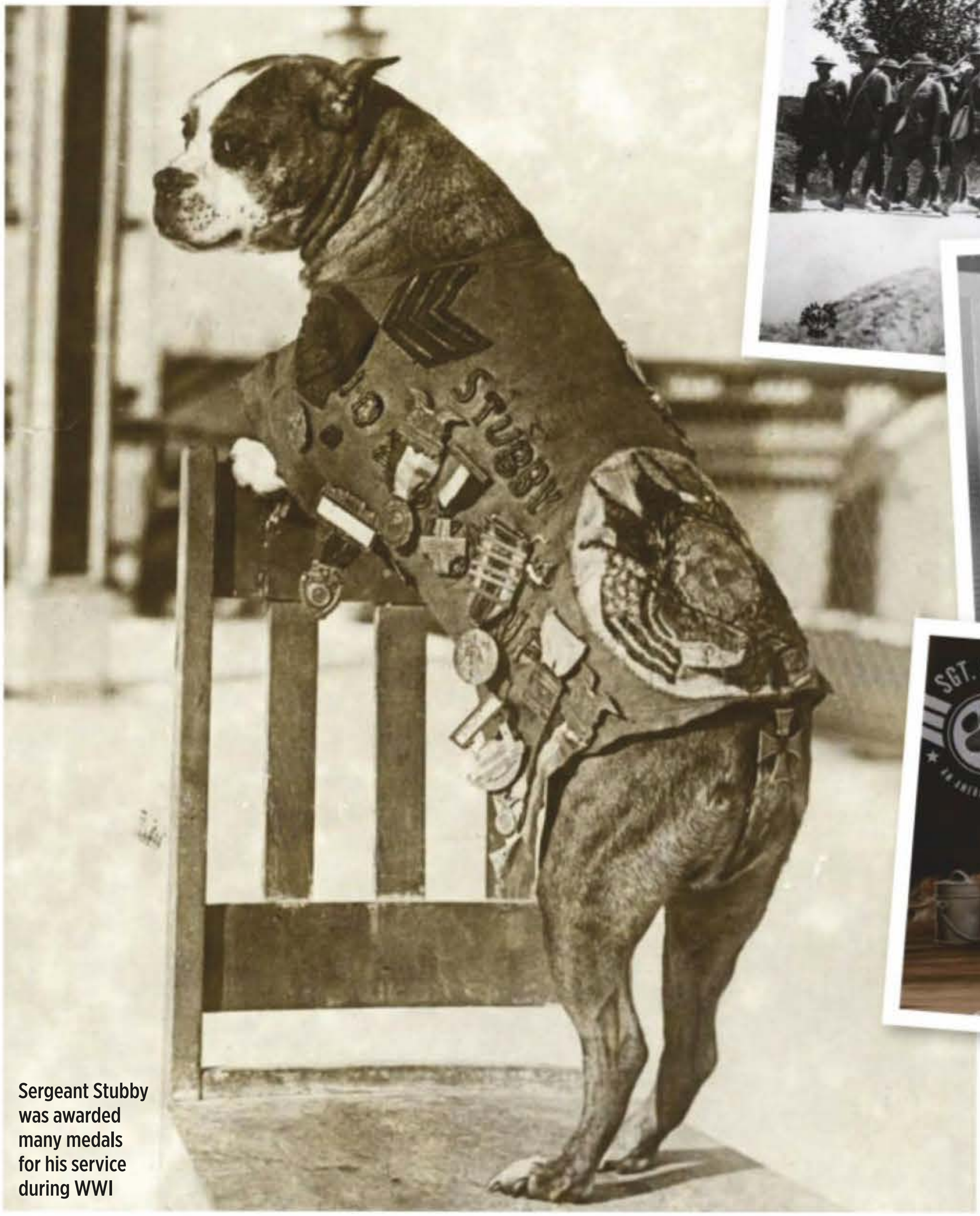
World War II

▶ The Allies sent thousands of pigeons into German-occupied territory with messages for the resistance. Pigeon NURP 39 TTTI brought back information that proved so valuable, the intel was shown to Winston Churchill himself.

RIN TIN TIN

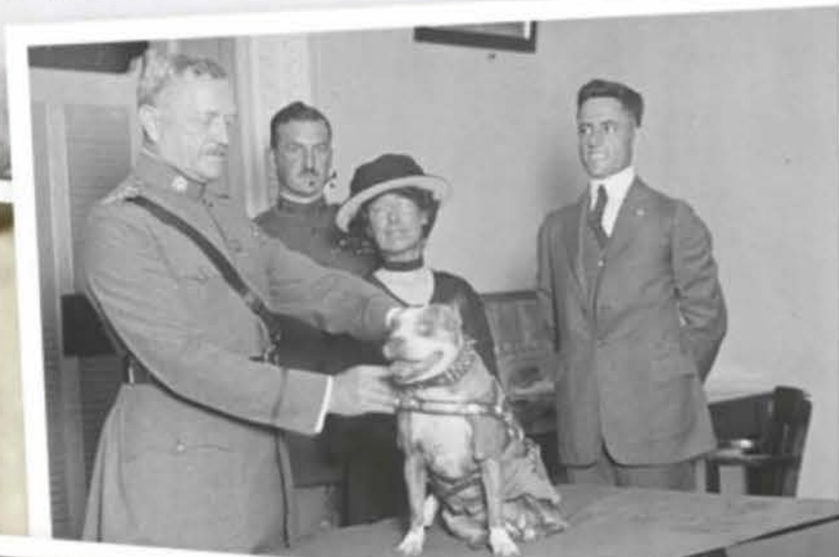
World War I

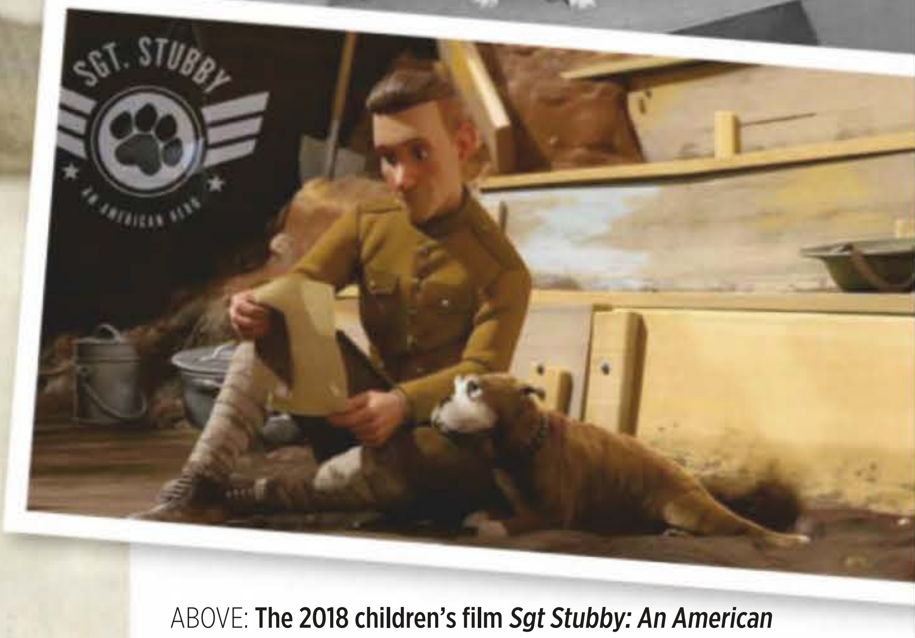
▲ Born in war-torn eastern France, the German shepherd was rescued from a German trench by an American soldier named Lee Duncan. The pooch went on to star in numerous silent films.



Sergeant Stubby was awarded many medals for his service during WWI

US soldiers march near Chateau-Thierry, one of the battles in which Stubby participated





ABOVE: **The 2018 children's film *Sgt Stubby: An American Hero* follows the friendship of Stubby and Robert Conroy**

ABOVE MIDDLE: **General John Pershing pins a medal to Stubby's coat while owner Robert Conroy proudly looks on**

> **"Stubby once saved an entire company by alerting the men to don their gas masks"**

◀ Stubby was involved in many battles while stationed overseas, including the second Battle of Marne and the Battle of Chateau Thierry both taking place in July 1918. In total, the courageous canine was present for four offensives and 17 battles, serving for around 18 months.

While at the front, Stubby did more than simply keep the men's spirits up. The dog's sharp ears meant he could hear the whine of artillery shells before they landed, which proved extremely useful for the American soldiers. Stubby was also particularly adept at locating wounded soldiers in no man's land and provided them with much needed comfort. And his keen sense of smell meant that he could readily detect mustard gas attacks: he once saved an entire company by alerting the men to don their gas masks.

One of Stubby's greatest recorded achievements occurred late one night on the Western Front. The incident was later relayed in Stubby's half page obituary in *The New York Times* an obituary that was given a great deal more column space than those of many other notable people of the time.

According to the paper, in the Chemin des Dames, Stubby had "captured a German spy and saved a doughboy [slang for a US infantryman] from a gas attack." Apparently, after "hearing a sound in the stillness of the night, the dog ... stole out of the trenches and recognized a German". And although the German tried to deceive Stubby, the determined dog "[seized] his prisoner by the breeches [and] held on until help arrived".

Alerted by the commotion, Stubby's fellow soldiers captured and imprisoned the spy. For his efforts that night, Stubby was given an Iron Cross medal that had belonged to the German spy.

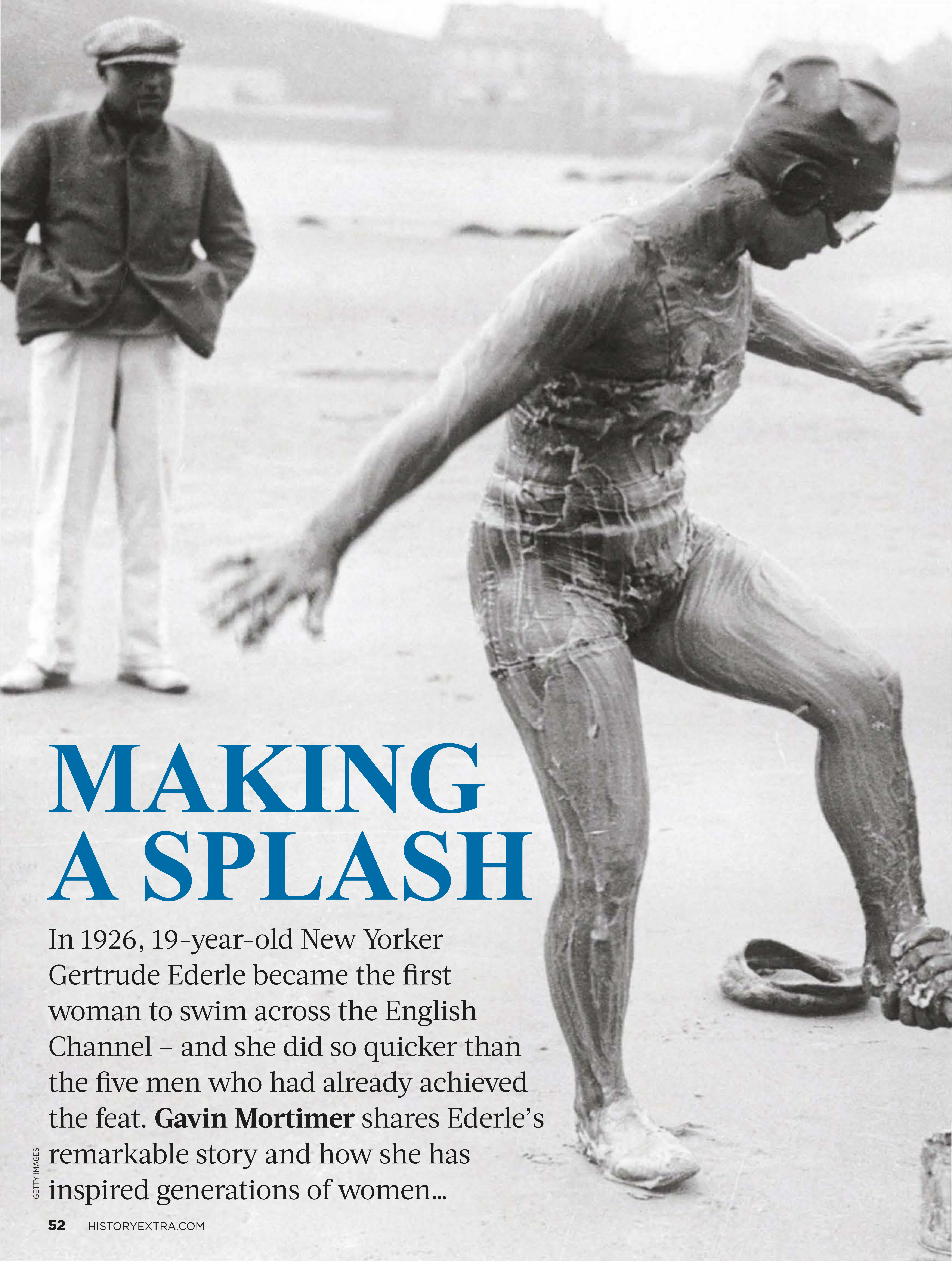
After the war, Stubby returned home to America. He was given a medal for heroism by the Humane Education Society an animal protection organisation and was received by US Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge and Warren G Harding. He also went on to become the mascot for a sports team at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, where Conroy studied law. Stubby was given the unofficial rank of sergeant a rank higher than that of his master. In 1926, Stubby died at home, reportedly in Conroy's arms. ⊙

GET HOOKED

WATCH

The animated film *Sgt Stubby: An American Hero* can be streamed on YouTube, Google Play and Amazon Prime, and is also available on DVD

ALAMY X2, GETTY IMAGES X6, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS X1



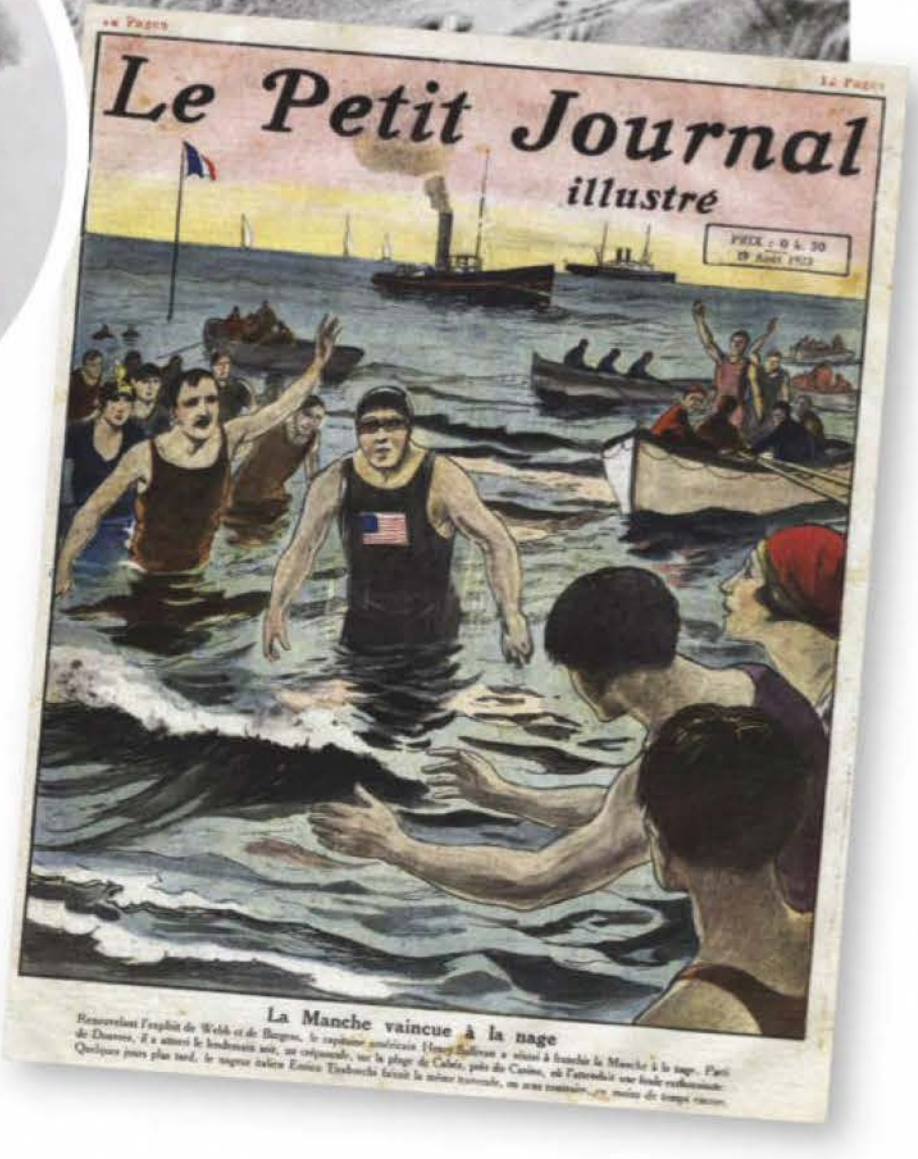
MAKING A SPLASH

In 1926, 19-year-old New Yorker Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim across the English Channel – and she did so quicker than the five men who had already achieved the feat. **Gavin Mortimer** shares Ederle's remarkable story and how she has inspired generations of women...

GETTY IMAGES

Gertrude Ederle is slathered in grease by trainer Bill Burgess, before beginning her record-breaking swim across the English Channel

To prepare for her incredible swim, Ederle practised in the English Channel itself



ABOVE: **Ederle won three medals at the 1924 Olympics for her impressive skills in the pool**

RIGHT: **Henry Sullivan was the first American to swim the Channel, in 1923**

The 1920s was a decade made for explorers and adventurers. After the horrors of World War I, the world needed heroes as it entered a glamorous new age and it found them in the likes of explorer Percy Fawcett, pioneering pilot Amelia Earhart, and mountaineer George Mallory, who famously disappeared while scaling Mount Everest. The exploits of these colourful characters still remain vivid, nearly 100 years later.

But one such hero has faded from memory: Gertrude Ederle (pronounced 'Ed er ly'), a shy 19 year old New Yorker who became the most famous woman in the world in the summer of 1926. Ederle was the first woman to swim across the English Channel a huge achievement in itself, but one made all the more impressive by the fact that she swam it faster than any of the five men who had gone before her. Although the feat has become relatively commonplace today, Ederle still deserves recognition for inspiring a generation of young women.

A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE

Ederle was a gifted swimmer who represented her country at the 1924 Paris Olympics. It was during this time, as the American team's ship sailed up the Channel, that Ederle had the grand idea to swim across it.

The previous year, Henry Sullivan had become the first American to swim the 21 miles that separated Dover from Calais, although he had actually traversed more than 50 miles because of the strong currents a factor that helped account for the 1,000 failed attempts by 200 swimmers since Matthew Webb's historic first crossing in 1875.

There were other challenges, too such as the debilitating temperature of the water, and the capricious weather but the main problem was the fact that the tide shifted direction every six hours. This meant that anyone brave enough to take on the Channel would need to swim in a zigzag fashion, changing direction with the movements of the tide.

Ederle first attempted the challenging swim in 1925, but after nine hours she was pulled from the water by her support team without achieving her goal. It had been a bitter lesson for the young American, and one from which she vowed to learn. The swim became personal, a fight between her and the

▶

> **"The swim became personal, a fight between her and the Channel, but it represented more than just a sporting challenge"**

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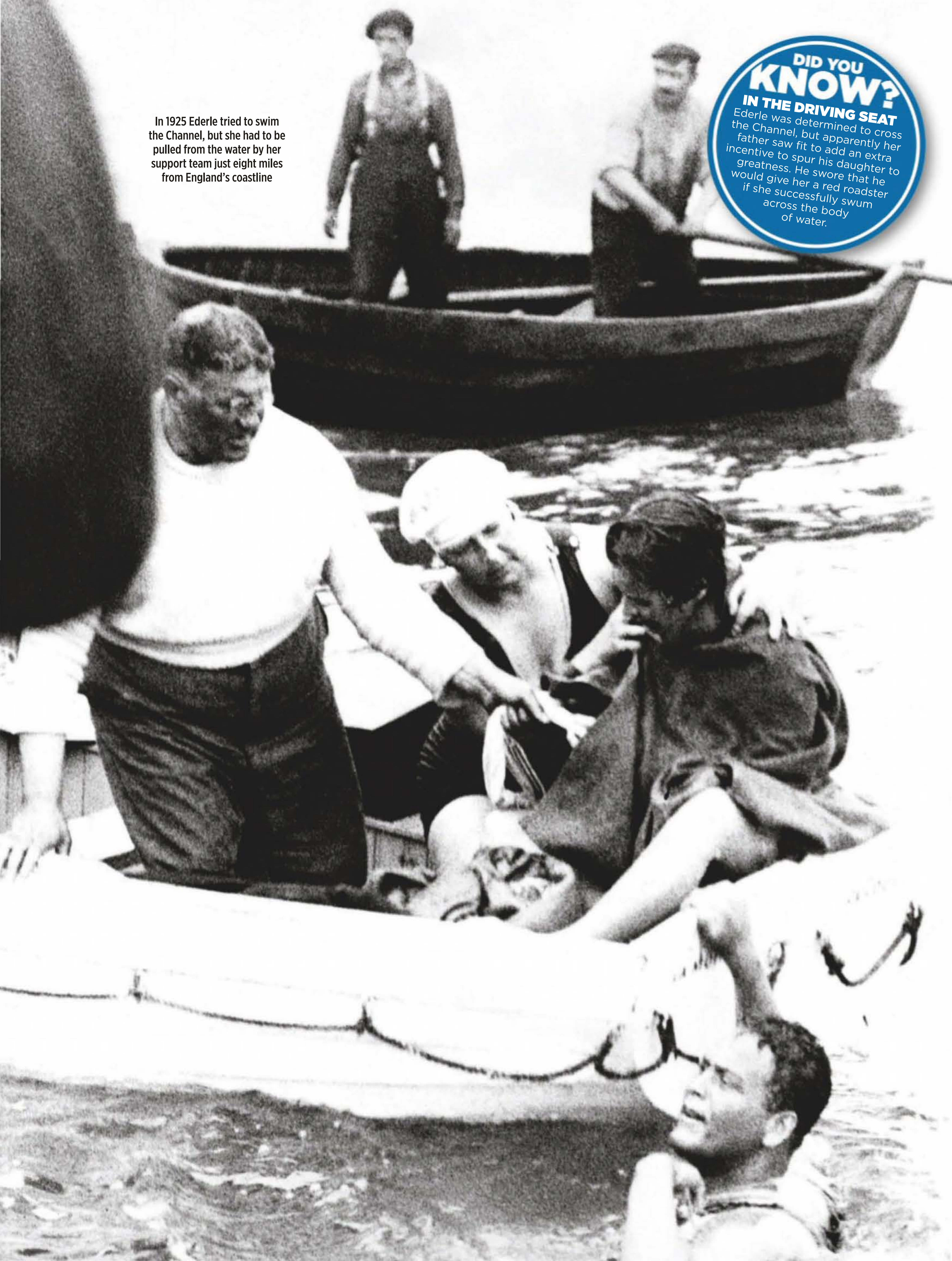


In 1925 Ederle tried to swim the Channel, but she had to be pulled from the water by her support team just eight miles from England's coastline

DID YOU KNOW?

IN THE DRIVING SEAT

Ederle was determined to cross the Channel, but apparently her father saw fit to add an extra incentive to spur his daughter to greatness. He swore that he would give her a red roadster if she successfully swum across the body of water.

Channel, but at the same time Ederle was aware that it represented more than just a sporting challenge.

THE MODERN WOMAN

In August 1920, the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution was ratified, and the vote was officially extended to women. It was a historic moment in American history, and it helped usher in a vibrant generation of young women who were independent and more assertive than their forebears, taking much of their lead from the confident women depicted in the burgeoning motion picture industry.

Ederle belonged to this generation of 'Flappers', whose trademark look was the short, bobbed haircut. Their photographs became a staple of the new tabloid newspapers, and when Ederle announced she was going to have another crack at the Channel, the *New York Daily News* contracted her to write an exclusive weekly column, offering her an eye watering $5,000 (with an additional $2,500 if she succeeded).

Ederle's first ghostwritten column appeared on 3 June, 24 hours after she had sailed for France. "I don't get half-a-million dollars for my efforts," she informed American readers. "So if I dance in the evening or pick up a ukulele for pleasure, I don't think it should be reported as a scandal … I don't want to be nagged at my training. I want to talk about clothes and shows and the Charleston."

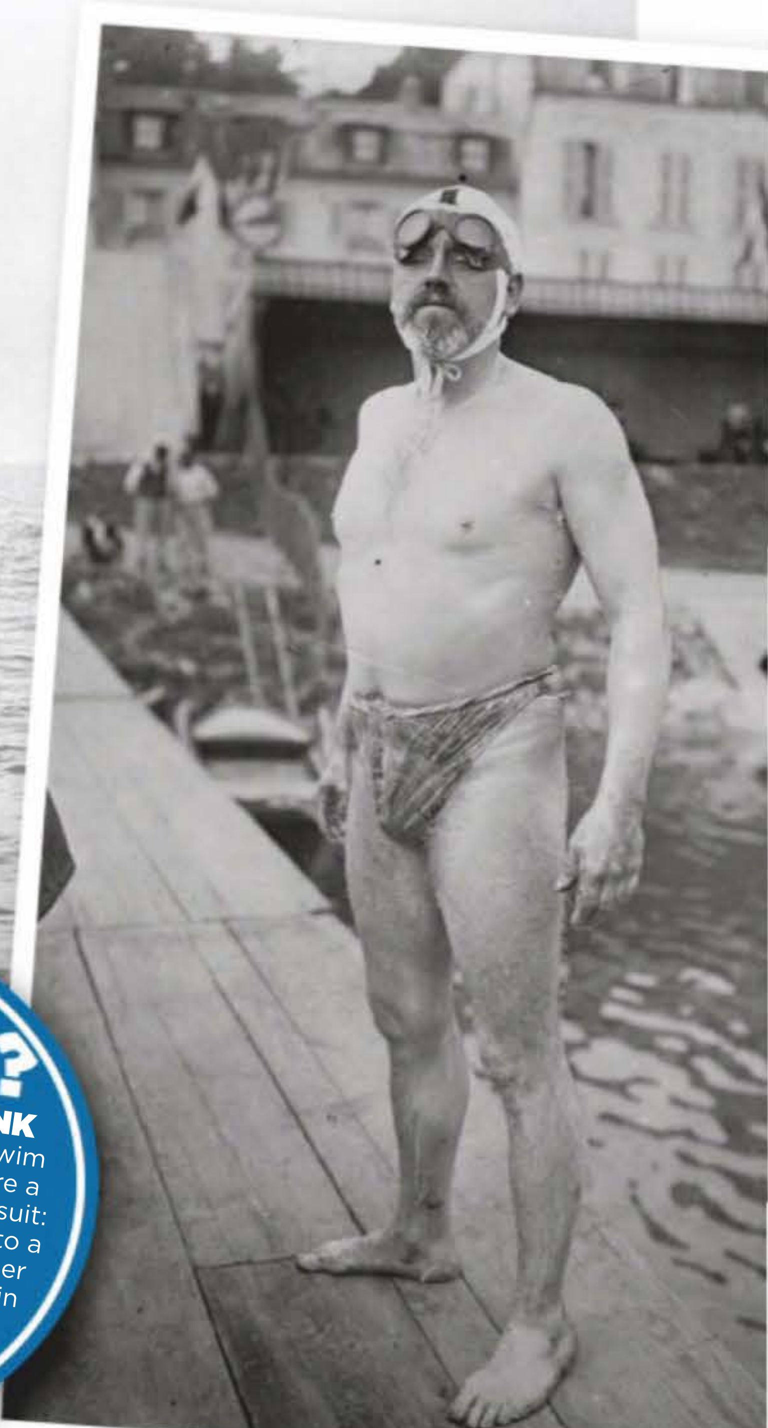
Once again, Ederle set up camp on the Calais coast. Remembering her failure the previous year, she spent several weeks training, learning about the currents and acclimatising to the cold. She was overseen by her English coach, Bill Burgess, who had become the second person to successfully swim the Channel when he crossed in 1911.

In the meantime, four other female swimmers (three Americans and one Englishwoman) arrived to try and beat Ederle across the Channel, but none of them were able to rise to the demands of the challenging route. This only strengthened the belief in Britain that women were incapable of swimming across a stretch of water that had defeated scores of strong men, including General Bernard Freyberg, who had a Victoria Cross to his name. If a war hero had failed, then what hope did a woman have?

Ederle, who labelled these chauvinists 'Channel Croakers', set out for England shortly after 7am on 6 August, wearing a specially designed two-piece silk swimsuit. It was barely visible, however, beneath three protective layers of grease: a base layer of olive oil; then lanolin, a heavy yellow-white grease; and on top of that a coat that combined lard and Vaseline. She looked more like a basted chicken than a swimmer as she dived into the Channel, quickly striking up a rate of 28 strokes per minute using her powerful overarm crawl.

> **"She looked more like a basted chicken than a swimmer as she dived into the Channel"**

After two hours in the water, Ederle was four and a half miles northwest of her starting point and about to swing



DID YOU KNOW?

WARDROBE RETHINK

When Ederle first tried to swim across the Channel, she wore a traditional women's bathing suit: a one-piece that was similar to a woollen dress. It rubbed at her skin and weighed her down in the sea. For her second attempt, she donned a daring two-piece.

ABOVE: **World War I Victoria Cross recipient Bernard Freyberg was among those defeated by the Channel – this is the end of one of his attempts**

RIGHT: **Ederle's trainer Bill Burgess: he knew what swimming the Channel involved, as he had done so himself in 1911**

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Fellow American swimmer Lillian Cannon wishes Ederle luck before she attempts to swim the Channel. Four other female swimmers had also tried to cross the Channel but failed, reinforcing ideas that women weren't up to the challenge

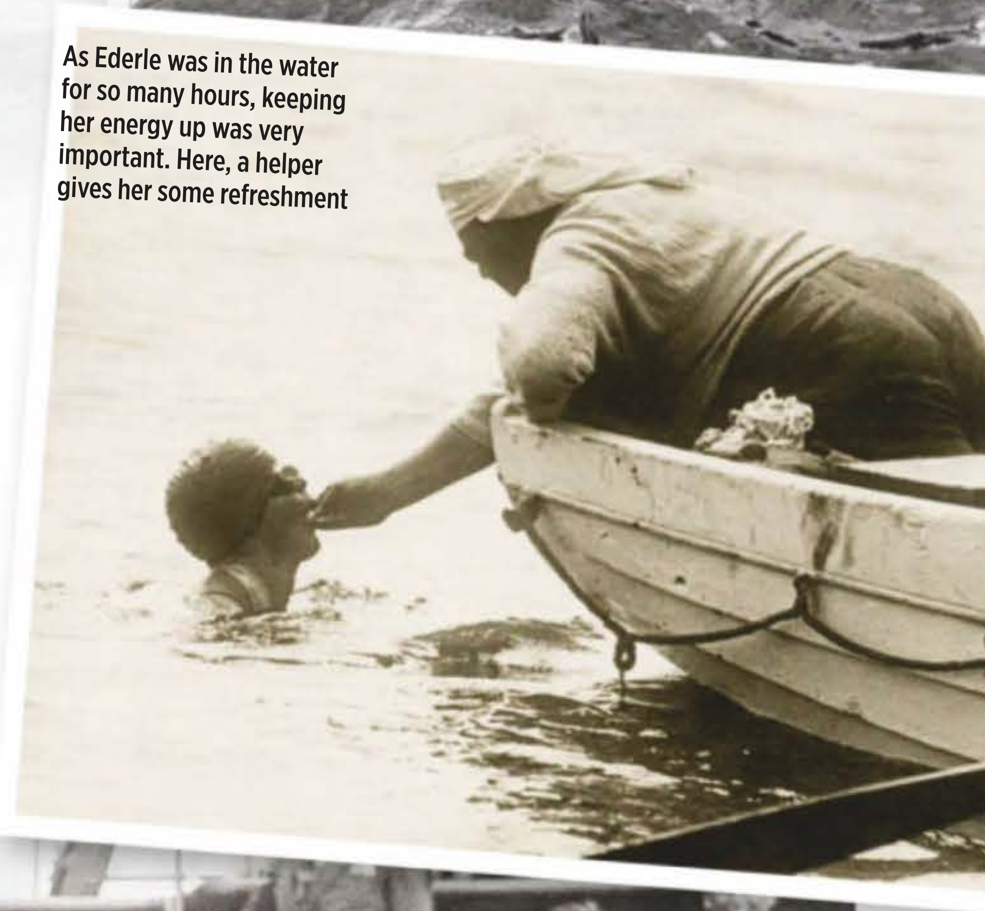
northeast on the flood tide towards the middle of the Channel. From her support boat, her coach, Burgess, handed her a bottle of chicken broth in a children's fishing net, while her sister, Margaret, played Ederle's favourite records on a gramophone.

After five hours Ederle had swum 11 miles, and Dover was ten miles to the northwest. She continued to make steady progress throughout the afternoon, but then at around 5pm the weather turned. Within an hour a storm had descended, and waves were rocking the support boat and pummelling Ederle's tired body.

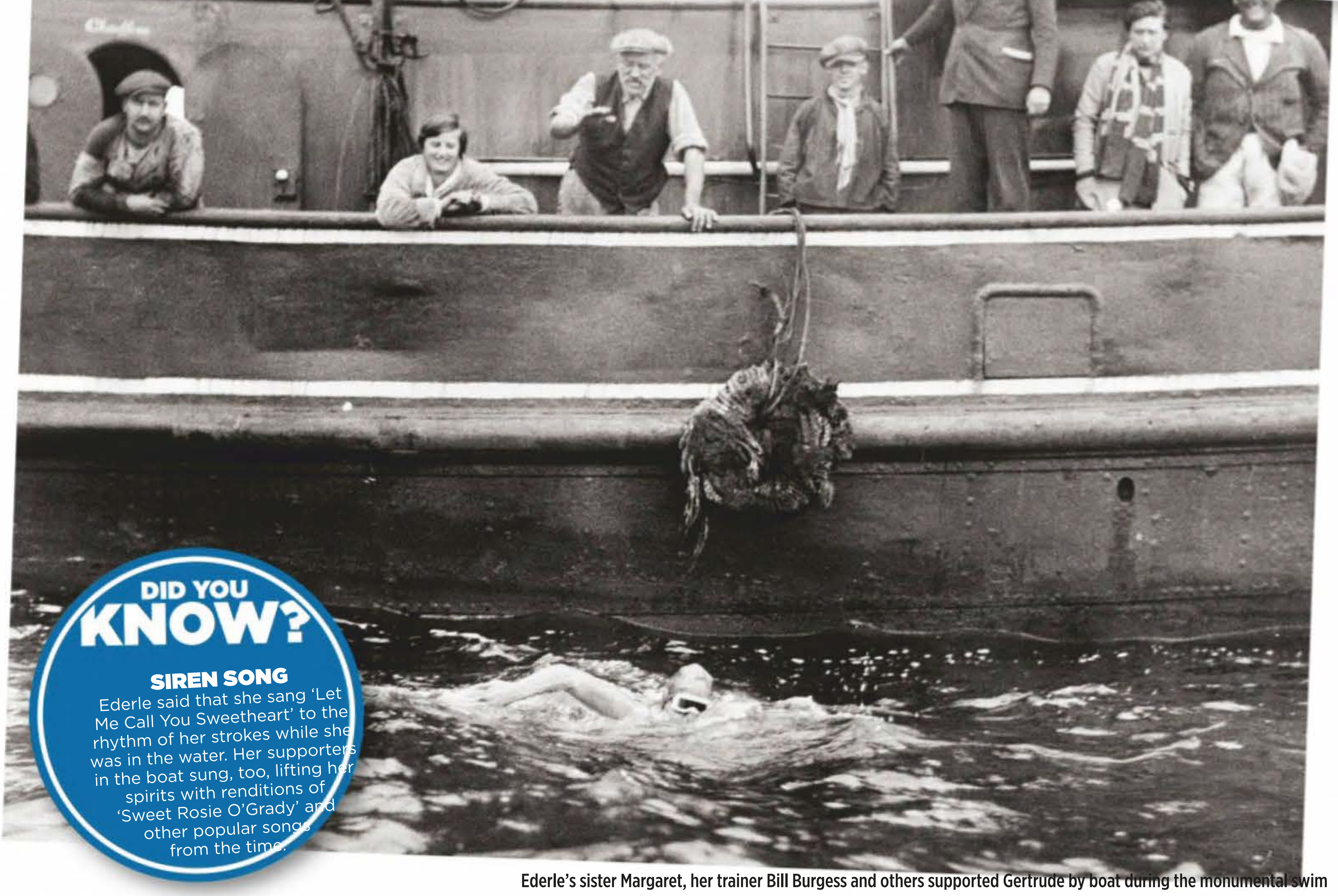
The rapidly deteriorating conditions forced Burgess to plot a new course, heading away from Dover with the current and going north up the Kentish coast. The next four hours pushed Ederle to the limits of her endurance, as she battled strong seas and chilly temperatures. At 9.48pm, her toes touched the pebbly beach at Kingsdown, five miles north of Dover – 14 hours and 39 minutes after she had set off from France. Ederle had not only become the first woman to cross the Channel, but she had also smashed the existing record of 16 hours and 33 minutes, set in 1923 by the Argentine swimmer Enrique Tirabocchi.

Despite the miserable weather, there were an estimated 4,000 people waiting to greet her – Britons who had been drawn to the beach in the giddy excitement of witnessing a slice of sporting history. It didn't matter that Ederle was an American; the people who welcomed her ashore were there to celebrate the triumph of the human spirit.

> **"A storm had descended, and waves were rocking the support boat and pummelling Ederle's tired body"**



As Ederle was in the water for so many hours, keeping her energy up was very important. Here, a helper gives her some refreshment

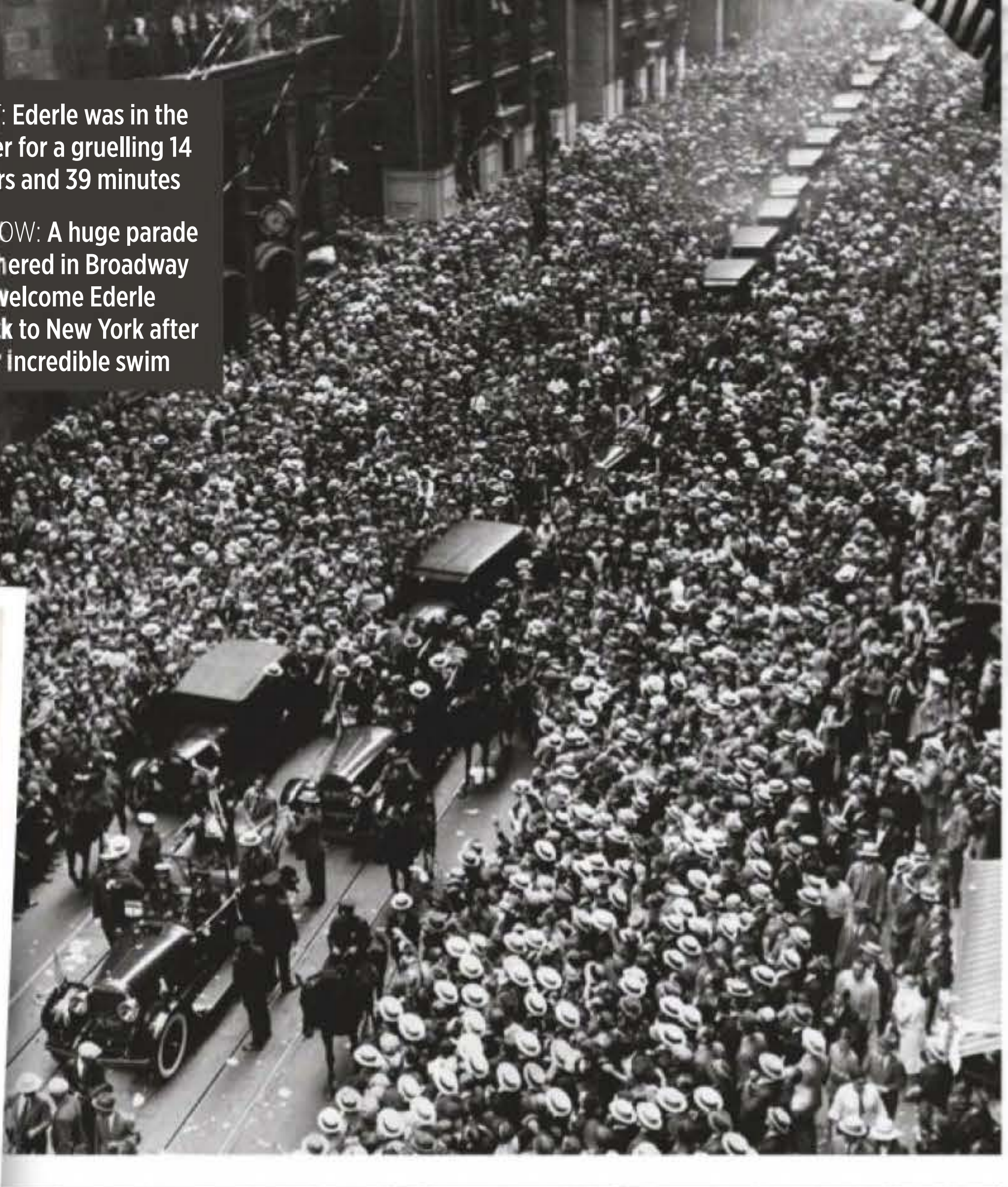


Ederle's sister Margaret, her trainer Bill Burgess and others supported Gertrude by boat during the monumental swim

DID YOU KNOW?

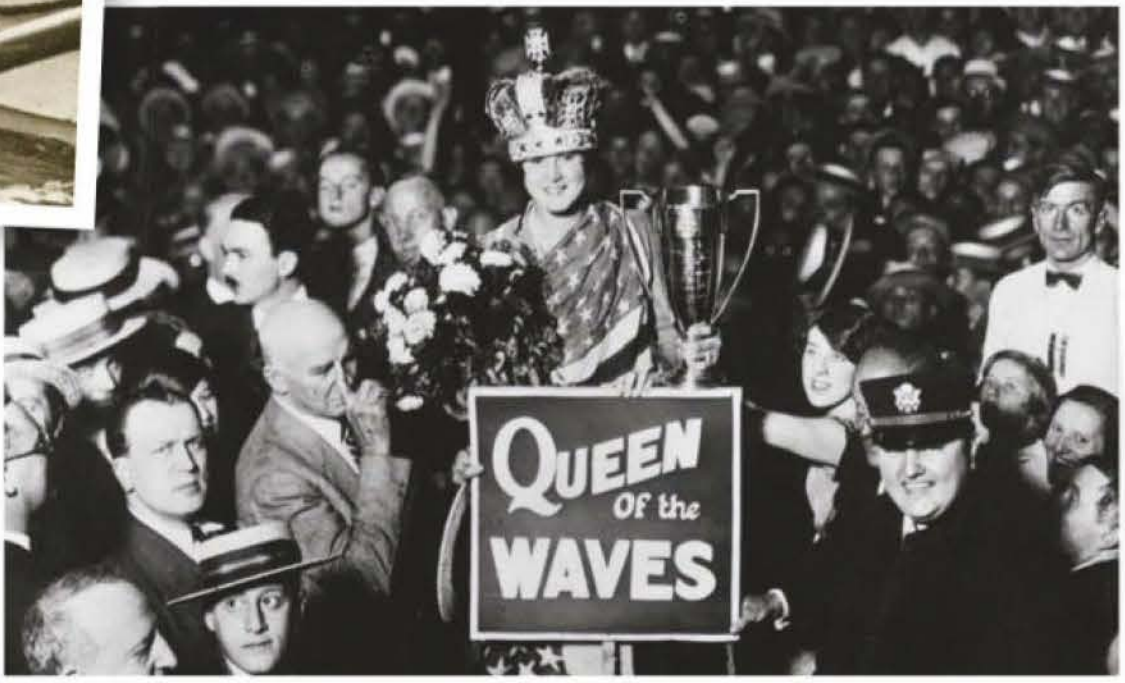
SIREN SONG

Ederle said that she sang 'Let Me Call You Sweetheart' to the rhythm of her strokes while she was in the water. Her supporters in the boat sung, too, lifting her spirits with renditions of 'Sweet Rosie O'Grady' and other popular songs from the time.



LEFT: Ederle was in the water for a gruelling 14 hours and 39 minutes

BELOW: A huge parade gathered in Broadway to welcome Ederle back to New York after her incredible swim



After Ederle swam across the Channel, she was crowned 'Queen of the Waves' in New York

When Ederle woke the next morning in a Dover hotel, it was to global superstardom. American and European newspapers alike hailed her feat as a historical event. Carrie Chapman Catt, leader of the American Suffragists, said it was "a far cry from swimming the Channel to the days to which my memory goes back, when it was thought that women could not throw a ball or even walk very far down the street without feeling faint". It was later reported that more than 60,000 women had gained their American Red Cross swimming certificates in the 1920s, many of whom cited Ederle's milestone swim as their inspiration.

Perhaps no one articulated the impact of Ederle's feat better than the well known American columnist, Heywood Broun, in a powerful article for *The New York World*. He wrote: "When Gertrude Ederle struck out from France, she left behind her a world which has believed for a great many centuries that woman is the weaker vessel. Much of government, most of law and practically all of morality is based upon this assumption. And when her toes touched the sands of England, she stepped out of the water into a new world." ⊙

GAVIN MORTIMER is a writer and historian. His books include *The Great Swim* (Short Books, 2008)

GET HOOKED

READ

Gertrude was voted number 58 in the 2018 *BBC History Magazine* poll: 100 Women Who Changed the World. Meet the other 99 remarkable women at *historyextra.com/100-women/100-women-results*

THREE MORE PIONEERING FEMALE SWIMMERS

A handful of women who have powered into swimming history

ANNETTE KELLERMAN (1887-1975)

▶ Pushing boundaries in both fashion and swimming, Australian professional swimmer Kellerman helped popularise synchronised swimming, wrote a swimming manual and became one of the first women to wear the – then highly controversial – one-piece bathing suit.

CHARLOTTE EPSTEIN (1884-1938)

◀ A firm believer in equality in sport, Epstein founded the Women's Swimming Association (WSA) in 1919 and pushed to have women's swimming included in the 1920 Antwerp Olympics. The event saw women participate in three swimming events for the first time; the US took gold medals in all three races.

MARITZA CORREIA (born 1981)

▲ Three-time world champion, two-time Pan American Games gold medalist and the first African-American to break a world record in swimming, Correia made history again at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece, when she became first Puerto Rican of African descent to compete on the US Olympic swimming team.

SHUTTERSTOCK X1, AKG IMAGES X1, GETTY IMAGES X6, EPSTEIN PORTRAIT: FROM GREAT JEWS IN SPORTS BY ROBERT SLATER, REPRODUCED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH JONATHAN DAVID PUBLISHERS, INC./JDBOOKS.COM

THE COLOUR OF WAR

Brazilian artist **Marina Amaral** and historian **Dan Jones** have joined forces to research and colourise some 200 photographs, taken between 1914 and 1945. The results, a selection of which are shown here, bring to life the stark, bloody reality of 'the long war'

"Colourising historical photos is not an exact science. It is a delicate and technical process that requires, on the one hand, diligent historical research and, on the other, the use of what can be called – without apology – artistic licence. Colourisation does not – cannot – 'restore' anything to a black-and-white photograph, for such an image has no hidden colours to hunt for. Instead, it adds them, based on known facts and responsible guesswork. It is an interpretive tool, whose limitations must never be brushed over or forgotten...

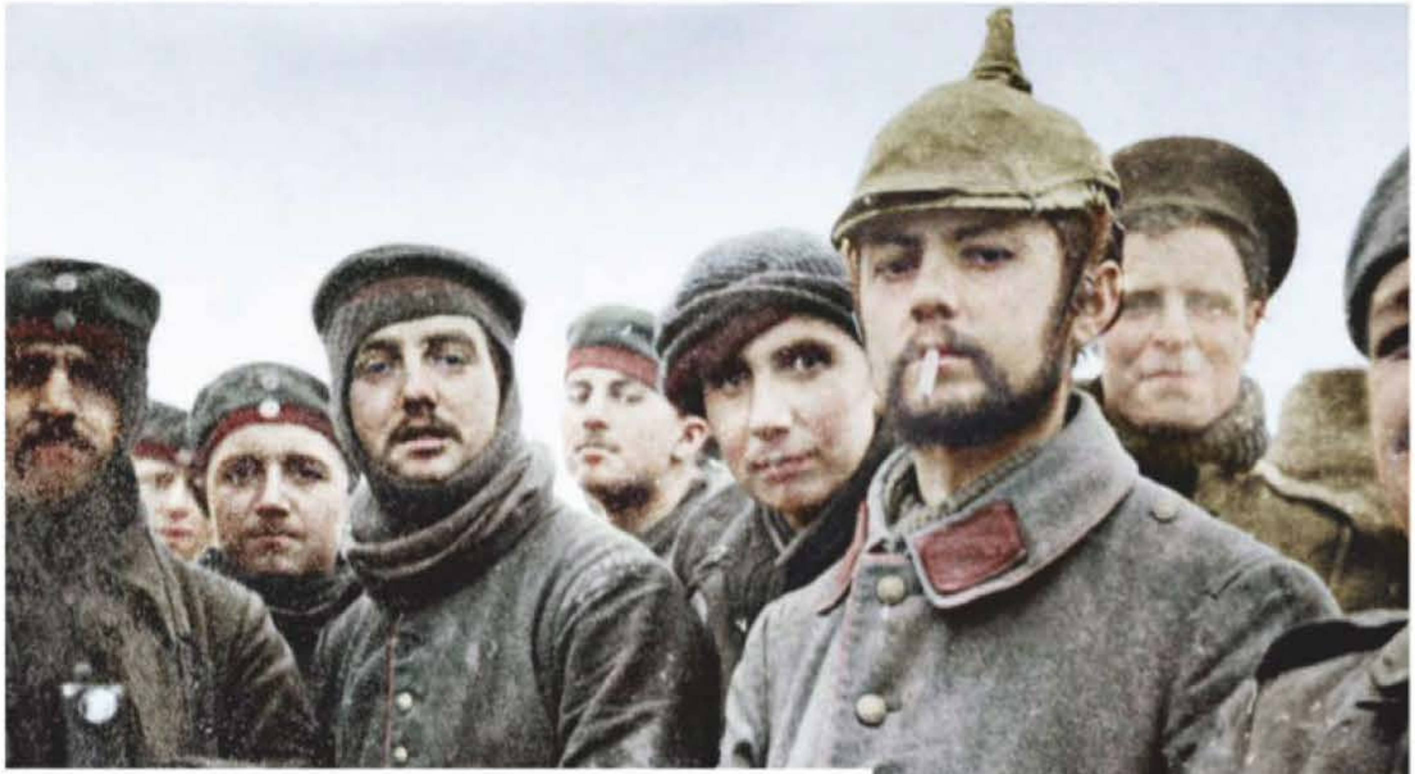
"Colourisation at its best is an emotional enhancing agent: it magnifies empathy and horror, pity and disgust. It challenges us to respond to history not simply as accountants and analysts, but as human beings, capable of the same fear, confusion, passion, ambition, anger and love as those whose images we see. It asks us to ask more. It nudges us to go off and hunt for the truth behind these extraordinary scenes. That is its purpose. That is its power."

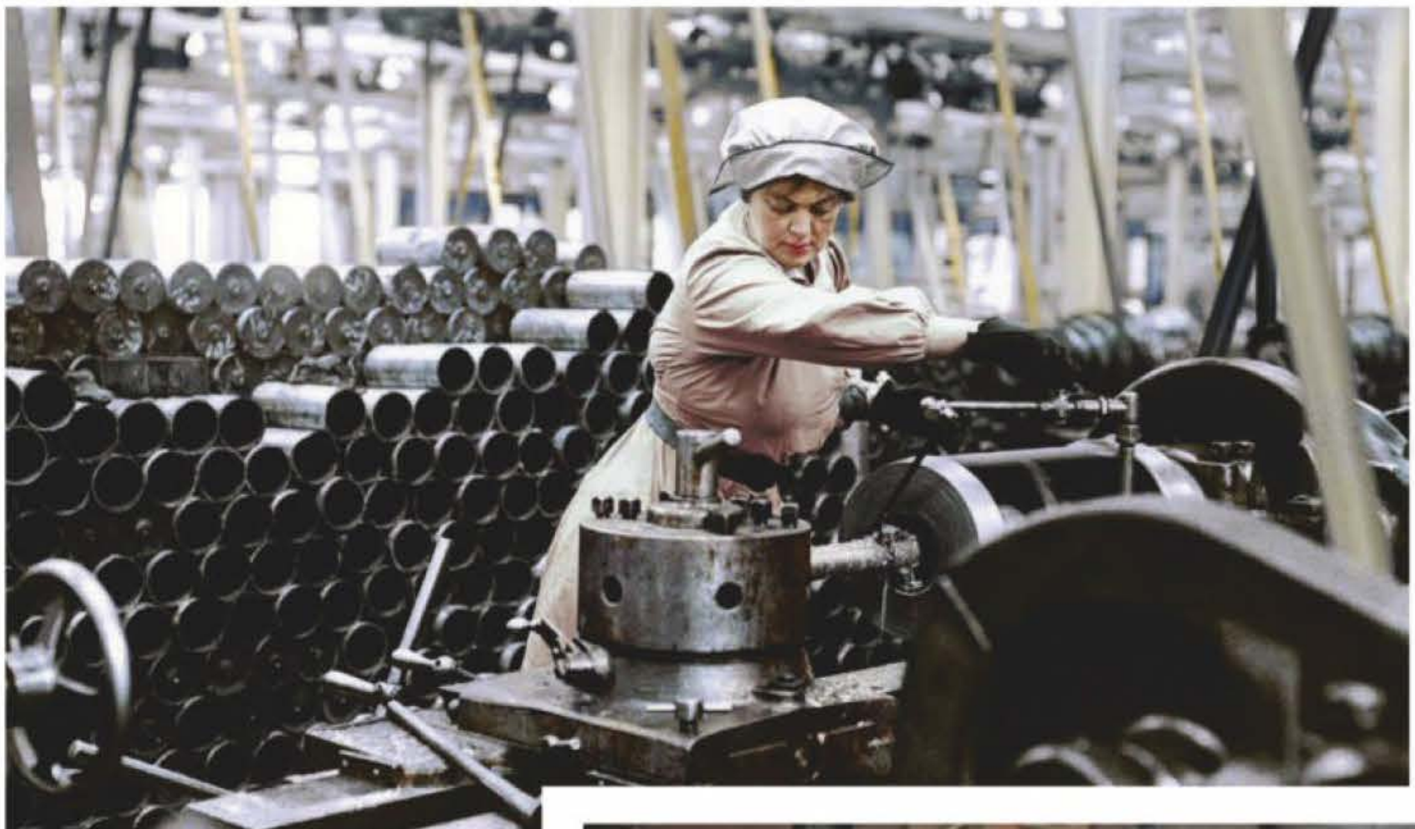
Marina Amaral and **Dan Jones**, writing in spring 2020

German troops face wintry conditions north of Oslo during the invasion of Norway in April 1940

THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE, 1914

▶ Soldiers from the 104th and 106th Saxon regiments of the German Imperial Army and the London Rifle Brigade swap items of uniform and mingle at Ploegsteert in Belgium during the unofficial Christmas 'truce'. As the firing stopped, men from both armies could be seen leaving their trenches and venturing into no man's land where they drank and sang together and even played impromptu games of football.



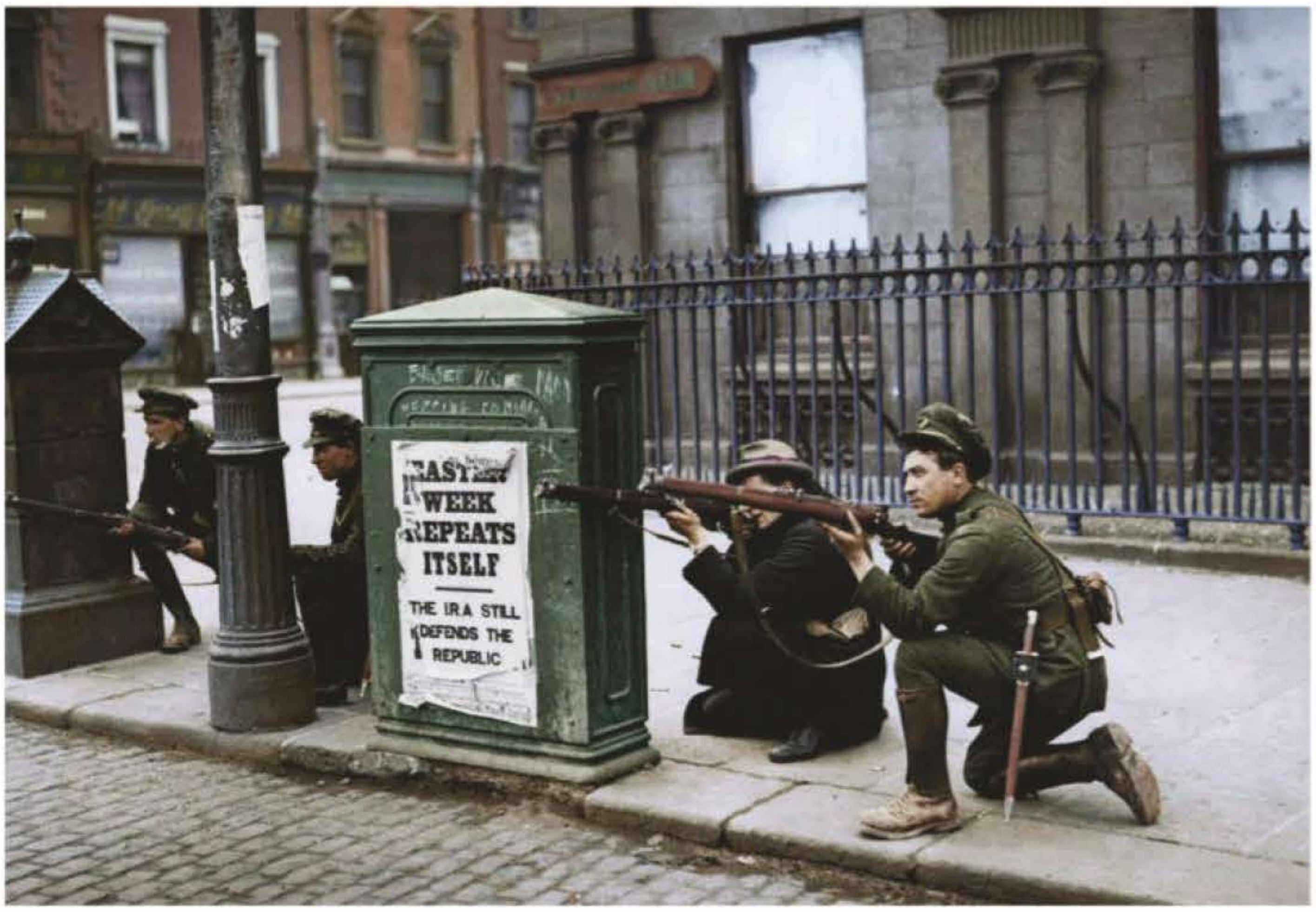


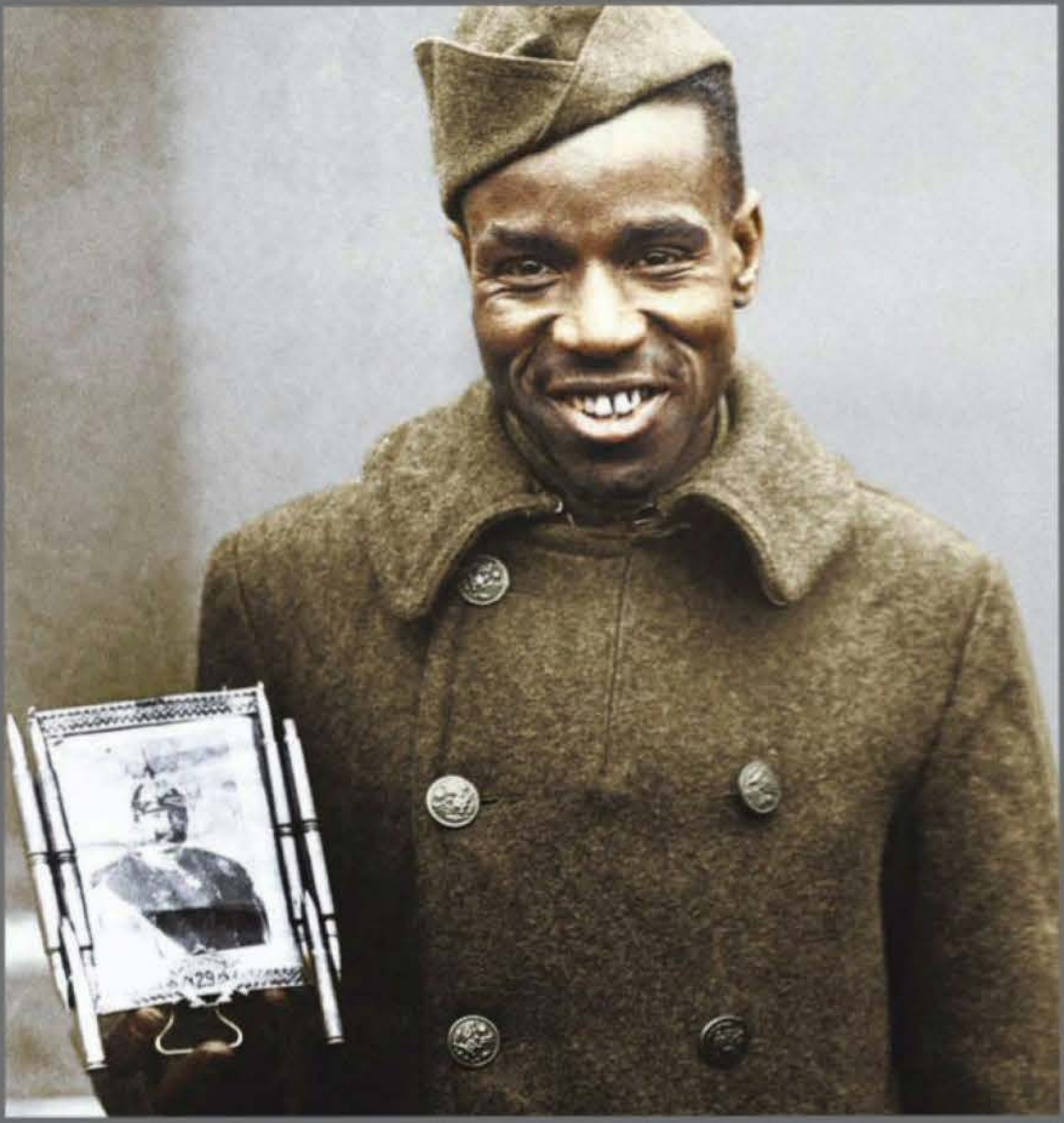
SHELL CRISIS, 1915

◀ As new arms factories sprang up across Britain, many women – 'munitionettes' – were called upon to perform the sometimes dangerous work of producing huge amounts of required ammunition.

CIVIL WAR, 1922

▶ In December 1921 – after years of intensifying Nationalist sentiment and the rise of Sinn Féin and the paramilitary Irish Republican Army (IRA), which campaigned violently for Irish independence – the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed. Ireland was divided into an Irish Free State, with self-governing dominion status, while Northern Ireland (composed of six of Ulster's nine counties), remained part of the UK. But fighting continued between pro- and anti-treaty factions: here, members of the pro-treaty Free State Army, pictured near O'Connell Bridge in Dublin, take up arms against the IRA.



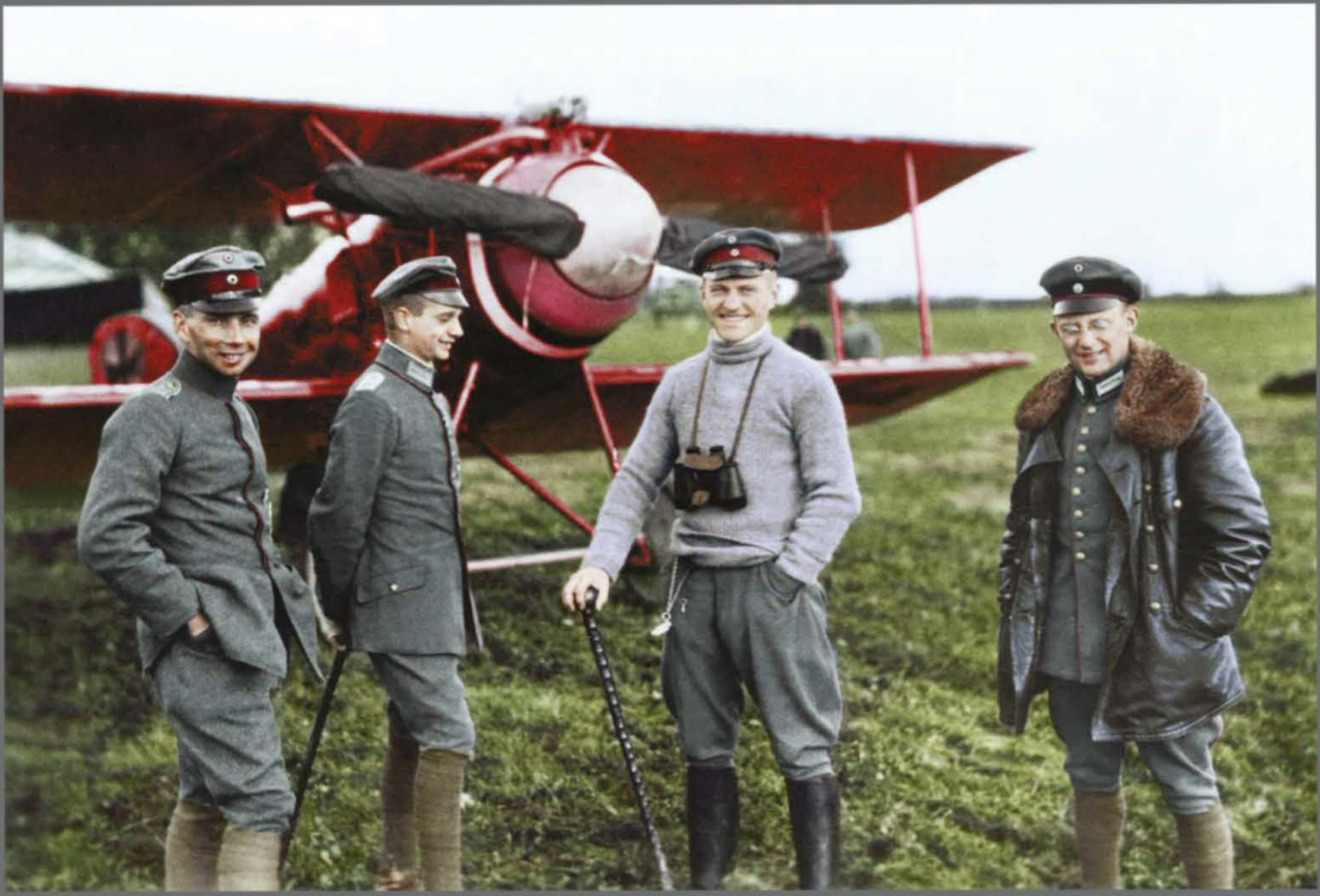


LUCKY CHARM, 1919

◀ Corporal Fred McIntyre (*left*) served in World War I with the 369th Infantry Regiment of the US Army – a highly decorated African-American regiment better known as the Harlem Hellfighters. This photo was taken as the Hellfighters were sailing away from Europe. In McIntyre's hand is a bullet-framed picture of the Kaiser, taken from a German soldier and thereafter carried for good luck. Only ten per cent of US servicemen in WWI were African-Americans, with just two 'Colored' divisions permitted to bear arms. Nevertheless, the Harlem Hellfighters fought for longer than any other US regiment in the conflict.

THE RED BARON, 1917

▼ Prussian aristocrat Manfred von Richthofen – commonly known as the Red Baron (*pictured with binoculars*) – was one of the most famous, and deadly, fighter pilots of World War I. Before his death in action on 21 April 1918, von Richthofen had downed no fewer than 80 Allied aircraft.



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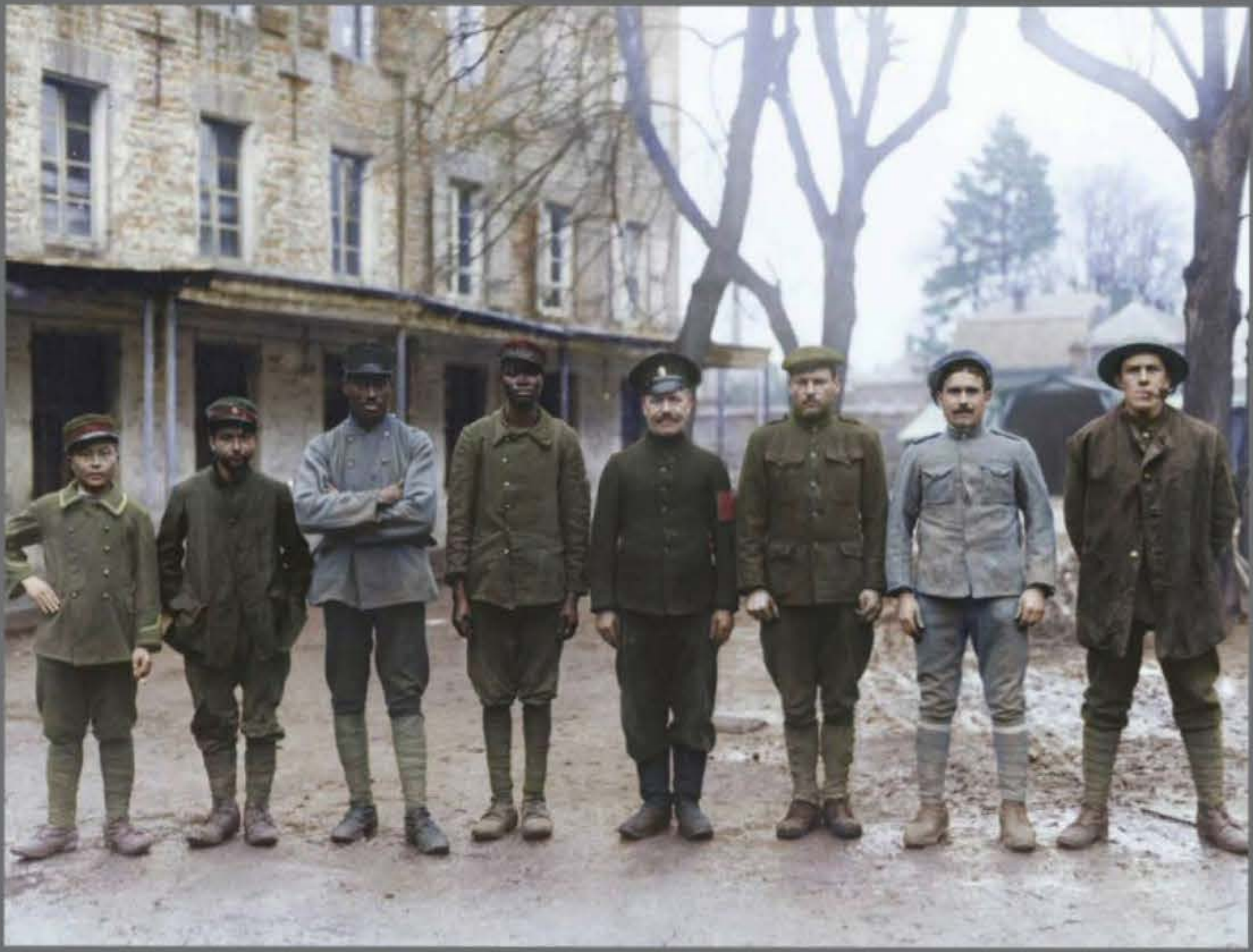
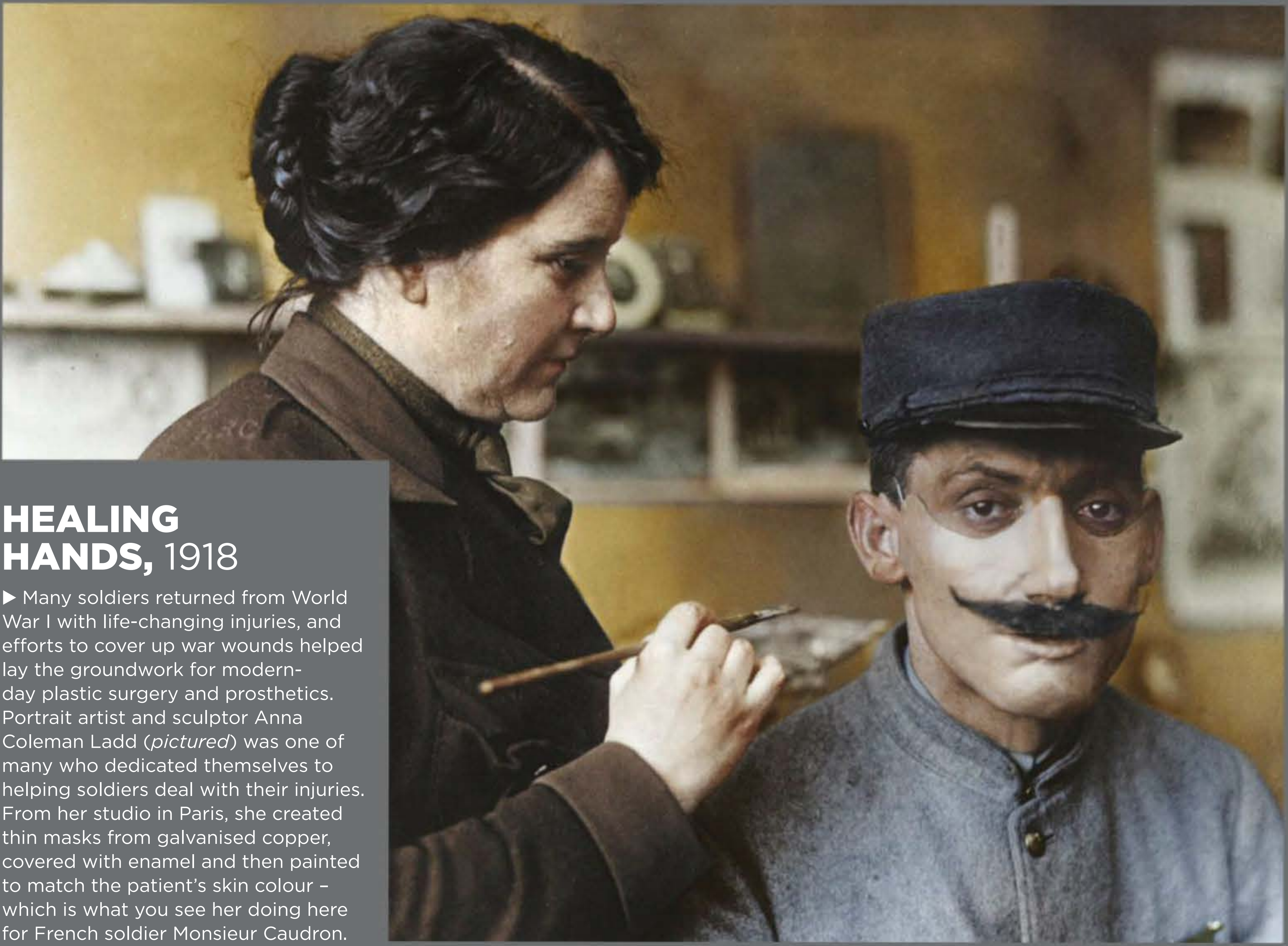


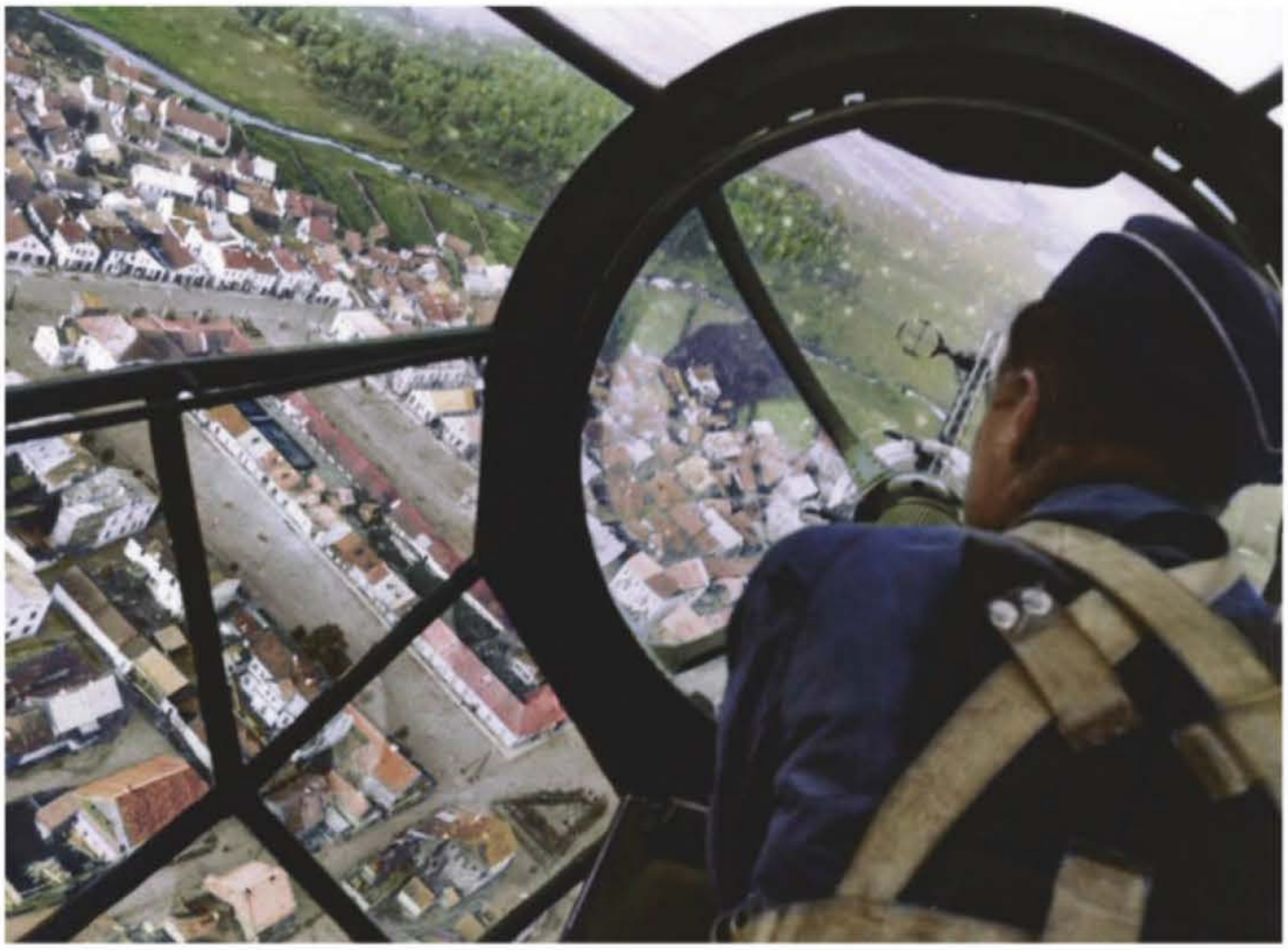
A GLOBAL CONFLICT, DATE UNKNOWN

◀ Around ten million people were captured over the course of World War I, and PoW camps were a regular sight behind the front lines. This German photograph depicts a group of eight soldiers of different nationalities: "Anamite [Vietnamese], Tunese [Tunisian], Senegalese, Sudanese, Russian, American, Portuguese, and English", according to the official record filed with the original photograph.



HEALING HANDS, 1918

▶ Many soldiers returned from World War I with life-changing injuries, and efforts to cover up war wounds helped lay the groundwork for modern-day plastic surgery and prosthetics. Portrait artist and sculptor Anna Coleman Ladd (*pictured*) was one of many who dedicated themselves to helping soldiers deal with their injuries. From her studio in Paris, she created thin masks from galvanised copper, covered with enamel and then painted to match the patient's skin colour – which is what you see her doing here for French soldier Monsieur Caudron.



BOMBER'S EYE VIEW, 1939

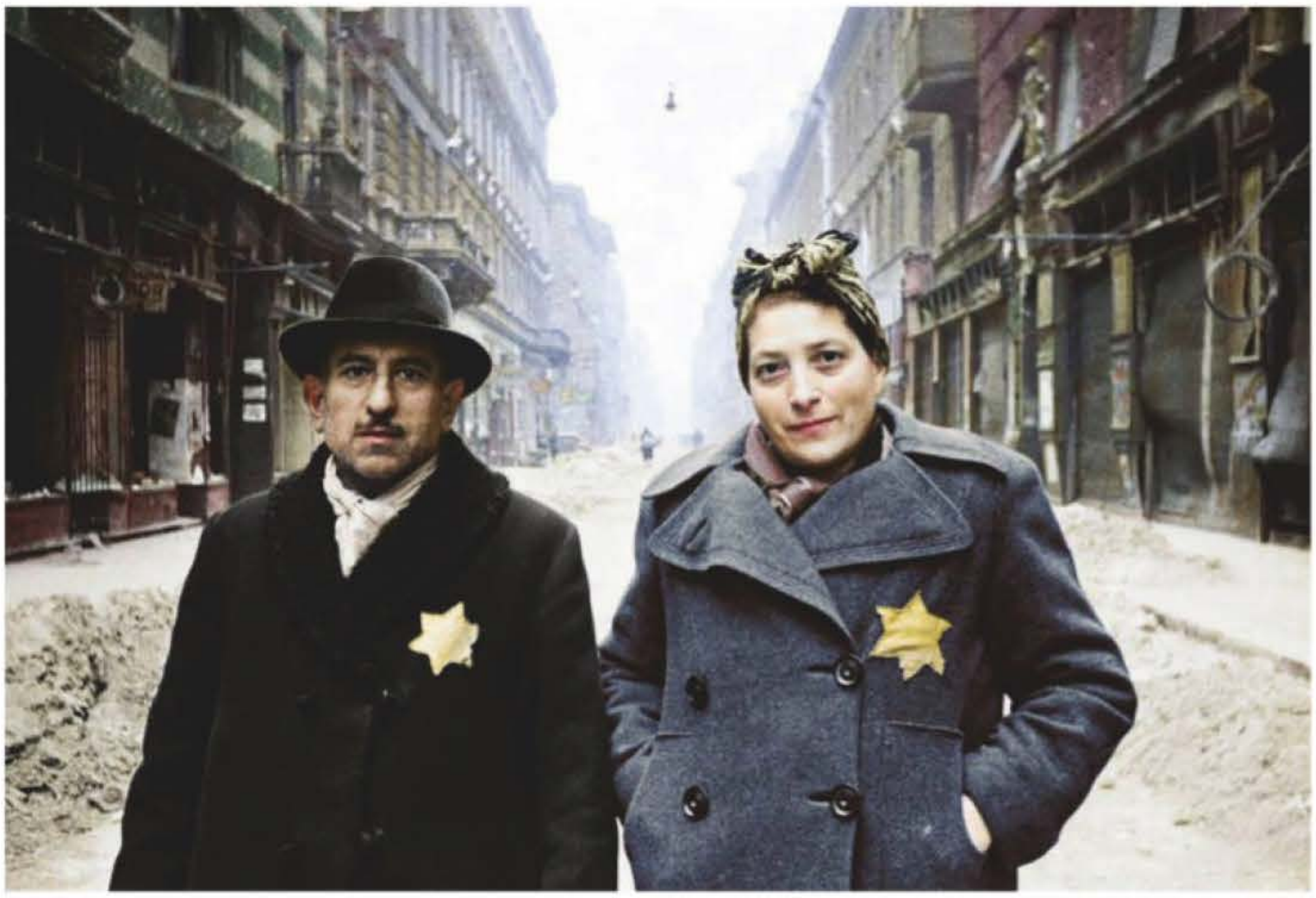
◀ Taken on 1 September 1939, the first day of the Nazi invasion of Poland, this remarkable image shows the view from inside a Heinkel He 111 German bomber. The Luftwaffe airman is lying on a cramped platform in the bomber's nose, ready to operate a machine gun and aim bombs on the people and buildings below.

READY FOR WAR, 1940

▼ On 10 May 1940, the same day Germany invaded Belgium and the Netherlands, 65-year-old Winston Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain as British Prime Minister. His rousing speech to the House of Commons three days later set the tone for the war ahead. Britain's only policy, he said, would be "to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us ... against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime".

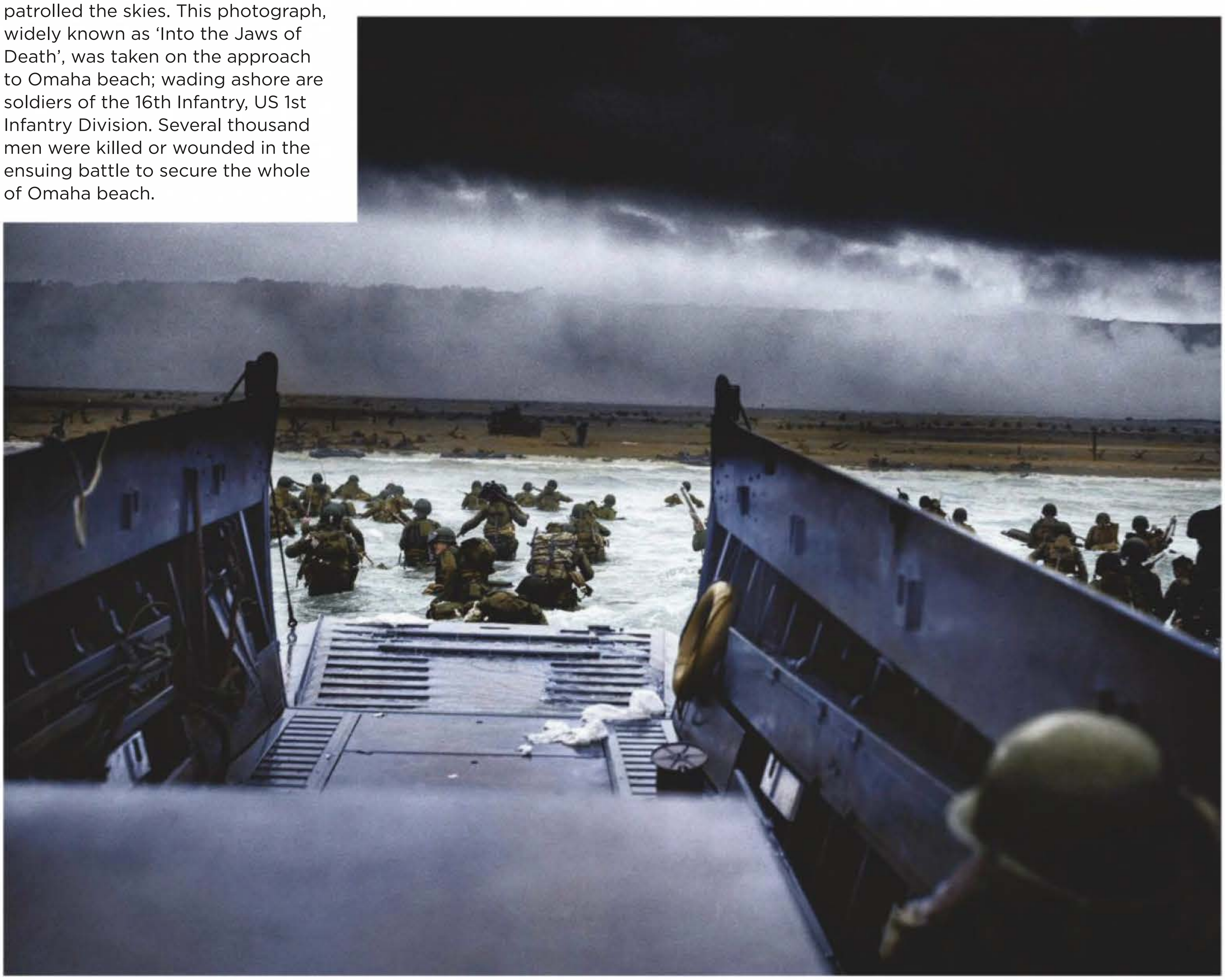
LIFE IN THE GHETTO, 1942

▶ Built in the autumn of 1940, the Warsaw Ghetto – in which the Jewish couple here were photographed – imprisoned some 450,000 of the city's Jews. The Nazis forced Warsaw's Jewish population to build three-metre-high walls around an area measuring less than two square miles. Conditions were appalling: diseases such as typhus were rife, and daily food rations amounted to fewer than 200 calories per person.



D-DAY LANDINGS, 1944

▼ On 6 June 1944, nearly 7,000 ships and landing craft carrying around 160,000 soldiers reached the beaches of Normandy. Above them, some 10,000 Allied aircraft patrolled the skies. This photograph, widely known as 'Into the Jaws of Death', was taken on the approach to Omaha beach; wading ashore are soldiers of the 16th Infantry, US 1st Infantry Division. Several thousand men were killed or wounded in the ensuing battle to secure the whole of Omaha beach.



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WHAT IS
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Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
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18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
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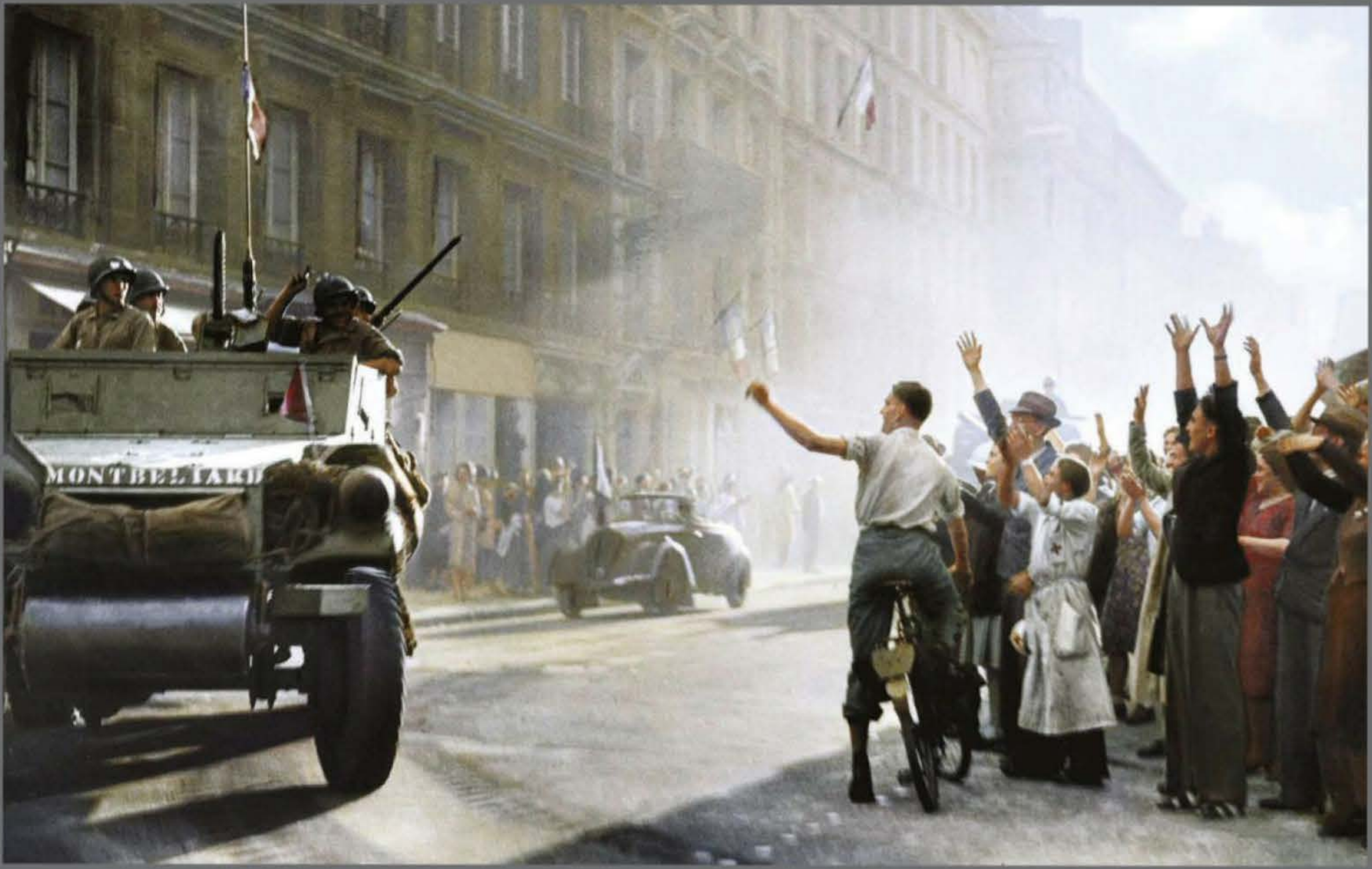
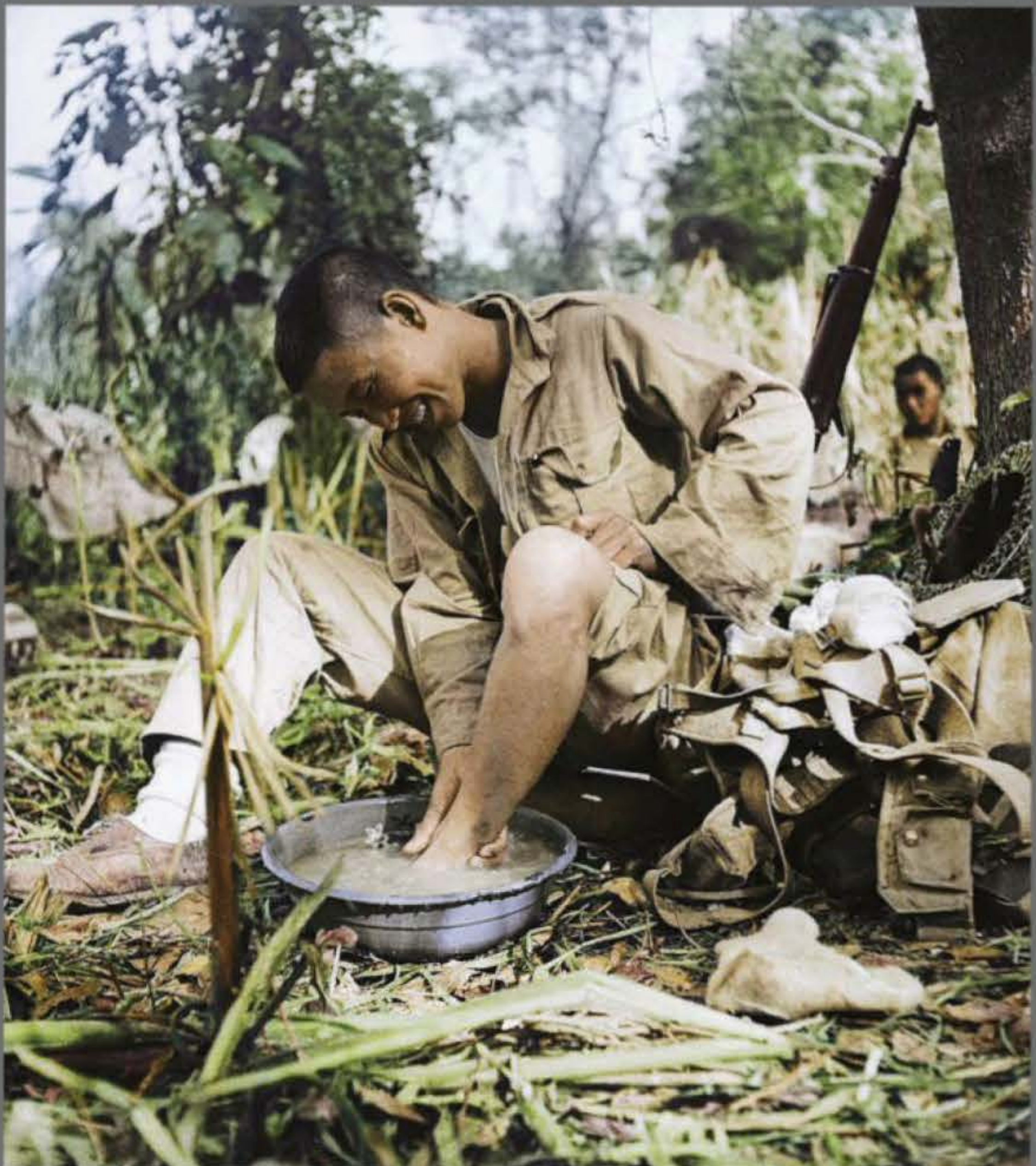




A WELCOME SIGHT, 1944

▲ After four long years of Nazi occupation, in August 1944, the city of Paris was finally liberated. Crowds of people cheered as Free French General Philippe Leclerc led the French 2nd Armoured Division into Paris (*shown here on a corner of Rue Guynemer*). German tanks had first entered Paris in June 1940: some two million Parisians had already left the city, but those remaining were forced to live under Nazi rule.

DOWNTIME IN BURMA, 1944

◀ Artillery Captain Huang Chuen-yu of the Chinese Expeditionary Force's Sixth Army, New 22nd Division, washes his feet at a command post in Burma, April 1944. Burma, then part of the British Empire, had been taken by Japan in 1942, cutting off the main supply route between India and China. Chinese troops – known as X Force – joined Allied forces to fight through Burma and open a new route: the Ledo Road. ⊙

GET HOOKED

READ

The World Aflame: The Long War 1914-1945 by Dan Jones & Marina Amaral with Mark Hawkins-Dady is published by Head of Zeus in hardback and is available now

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

WHAT IF...

ABRAHAM LINCOLN HADN'T BEEN SHOT?

Jonny Wilkes talks to **Professor Adam Smith** about how reconstruction of the war-torn United States would have had stronger foundations with Lincoln at the helm – but potentially at the cost of his legacy

On the evening of 14 April 1865, Confederate sympathiser John Wilkes Booth fired a bullet into US President Abraham Lincoln's head and changed the course of history. Lincoln succumbed to his wounds just days after the American Civil War effectively ended – but had Wilkes Booth not killed him, the president would have seen out his second term rebuilding the nation.

Politically savvy, willing to compromise and evolving in his views – not to mention popular and respected – Lincoln was the right man to help steer the United States out of war and into the Reconstruction era: the process of readmitting the seceded states and finding a place for around four million former slaves. But after Lincoln's assassination, this colossal undertaking fell instead to the Democrat vice president, Andrew Johnson – a southern slave owner and an obstinate bigot.

"Johnson was an out-and-out white supremacist, whose political philosophy, like all Jacksonian Democrats, was absolutist in terms of natural equal rights for white people – essentially white men," says Adam Smith, Edward Orsborn Professor of US Politics and Political History and director of the Rothermere American Institute at the University of Oxford. "Lincoln, an old Whig, had a much more nuanced notion of gradations of rights." So, claims Smith, while Lincoln was the great emancipator, he was no radical out to build a biracial democracy.

Lincoln may have supported Congress in pushing for limited extension of suffrage to "very intelligent" freedmen or those who had fought for the Union, and he undoubtedly would have supported the Freedmen's Bureau in providing federal assistance. "But would the condition of African American people in the South have been substantially different? No," says Smith. "The South would have ended up in the same state – with Jim Crow, segregation and disenfranchisement – which was solidified in the 1890s, not during Reconstruction. There was no way white southerners weren't running the show."

COMPROMISE OR CALAMITY

Taking advantage of Johnson's leniency towards the South, Southern lawmakers introduced the Black Codes – laws abhorrently restricting the newly given freedoms of former enslaved people. There would probably still have been codes of a kind under Lincoln, but it's likely that they would have been less aggressively enforced. This would have been a result of a far more cooperative relationship between president and Congress.

Whereas Johnson's conflicts with a powerful minority known as the Radical Republicans led to his impeachment and the Radicals imposing more extreme and punitive measures on the South, Lincoln tended to side with the Republican majority – and, if he hadn't been shot, perhaps he could have prevented the alienation of the Radicals.

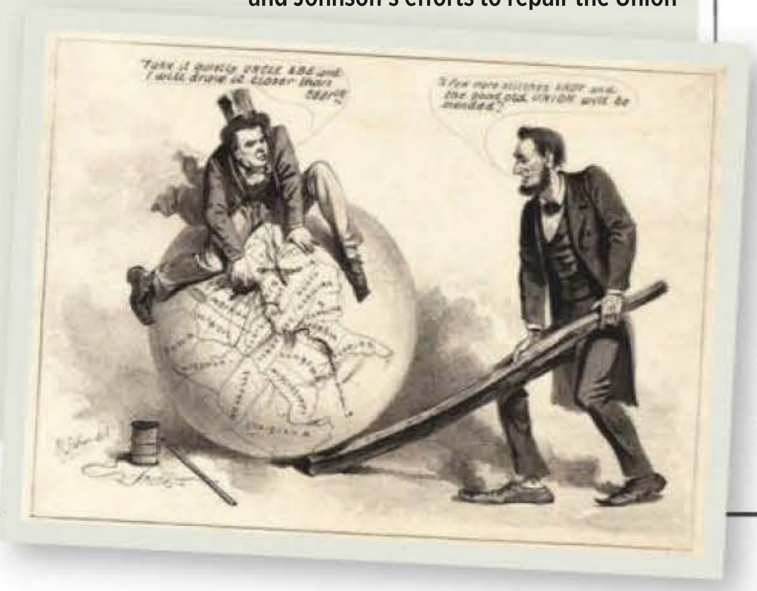
But, according to Smith, tensions would still have existed: "They still would have faced the same issues over whether to continue military occupation of the South, pressure over the disenfranchisement of former Confederate leaders, and the question of black enfranchisement. With Lincoln, though, they would have been better finessed."

Smith argues: "Lincoln would have steered a middle path." He wouldn't have been temperamentally comfortable with a constitutional amendment federally mandating the extension of the franchise to

IN CONTEXT

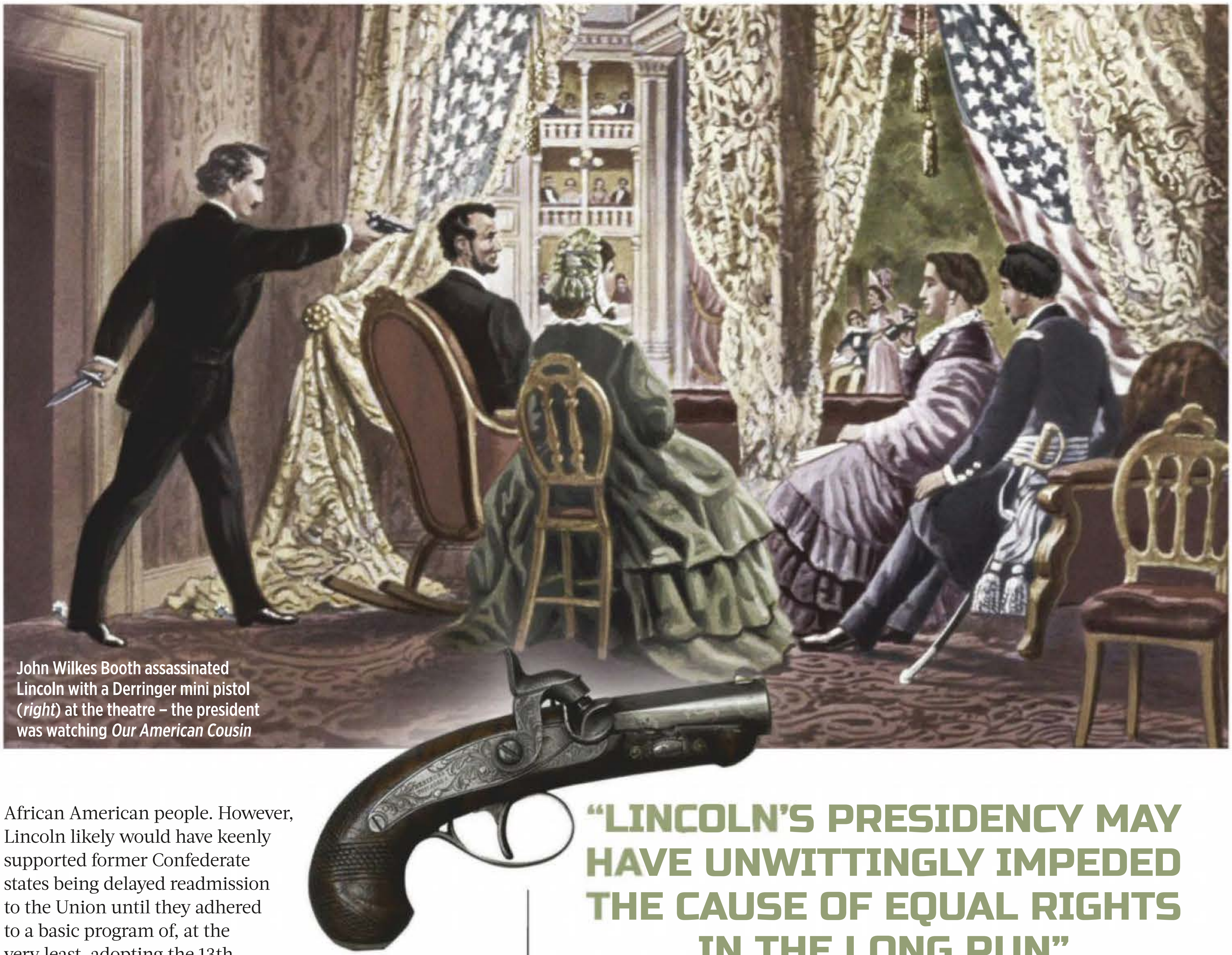
The American Civil War was all but over, with enslaved people emancipated and US President Abraham Lincoln looking towards Reconstruction. But his grand plans came undone on 14 April 1865, when Confederate sympathiser John Wilkes Booth shot him, and Andrew Johnson became president. Wishing to readmit the seceded states into the Union quickly, Johnson offered pardons, returned property to southerners and gave them the power to form their own governments. The South ratified Black Codes to impose restrictions on freed people that were almost akin to slavery.

Johnson faced strong opposition in Congress from the Radical Republicans. They pushed through more extreme measures, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Reconstruction Acts – with the latter dividing the South into military districts – and the 14th Amendment. Johnson was impeached and came within one vote of conviction. There was also a violent backlash in the South, as white supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan formed. The effects of Reconstruction have been felt in US race relations ever since.


"Take it quietly UNCLE ABE and I will draw it closer than ever!!"
"A few more stitches ANDY and the good old UNION will be mended!"

Political cartoons made light of Lincoln and Johnson's efforts to repair the Union

GETTY IMAGES X3



John Wilkes Booth assassinated Lincoln with a Derringer mini pistol (*right*) at the theatre – the president was watching *Our American Cousin*

> **“LINCOLN’S PRESIDENCY MAY HAVE UNWITTINGLY IMPEDED THE CAUSE OF EQUAL RIGHTS IN THE LONG RUN”**

African American people. However, Lincoln likely would have keenly supported former Confederate states being delayed readmission to the Union until they adhered to a basic program of, at the very least, adopting the 13th Amendment (the abolition of slavery) and other essential points, such as the redistribution of property to freed people. Lincoln would have looked to literally rebuild the nation, too, with a concerted push for infrastructure improvements.

One concerning potential consequence of a Reconstruction with Lincoln as president is the possibility of alterations to the 14th Amendment. The absence of the Black Codes and Johnson’s tolerant treatment of the South would have meant that there was less of a backlash in the North, perhaps affecting the language of the amendment or even its very existence.

This could have been very serious indeed, as Smith views the 14th Amendment as “absolutely fundamental to American history; a reshaping of the constitutional landscape”. Notably, it defined citizenship for the first time, included African American people and guaranteed those citizens equal rights under the law.

The final clause then gives Congress the authority to enforce the amendment – a revolutionary move making citizenship a federal matter. This clause went on to form the basis of the Civil Rights legislation that was drawn up in the 1960s. So a more moderate approach spearheaded by Lincoln may have meant more moderate, less centralising language. According to Smith, this could have had a significant impact on future generations: “The Civil Rights Movement could have happened in a very different way, and without being able to invoke the constitutional agency of the federal government. Lincoln’s presidency may have unwittingly impeded the cause of equal rights in the long run.”

DID YOU KNOW?

LAST WORDS

On 11 April 1865, Abraham Lincoln gave a speech in which he expressed support for giving some black people the vote. In the audience was an infuriated John Wilkes Booth, who said to his friend: “That is the last speech he will ever make.” True to his word, Booth shot the president three days later.

And what of Lincoln’s own reputation had he not been assassinated? Instead of being remembered as the president who saved the Union, freed enslaved people and became a martyr of liberty, he all too easily could have been blamed for any issues in the post-war years.

By opposing more radical positions, such as a federal guarantee of black voting rights, it’s possible that Lincoln may not have come to be so highly regarded by posterity. Smith concludes: “The fact he was martyred elevated him to a status, not just in the US but around the world, which he most likely wouldn’t have had if he had lived.” ⊙

READ

Abraham Lincoln by Professor Adam Smith (The History Press, 2014)

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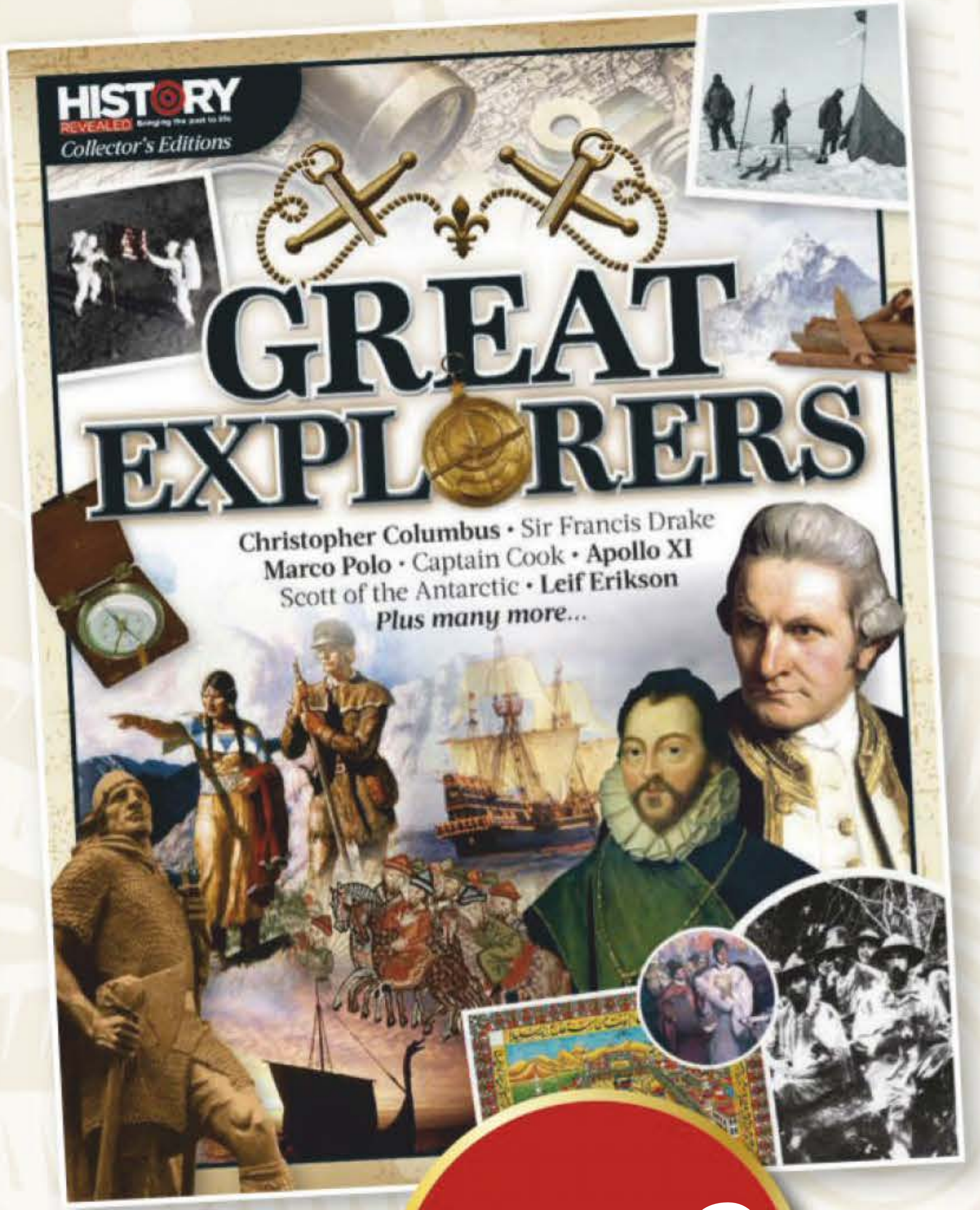

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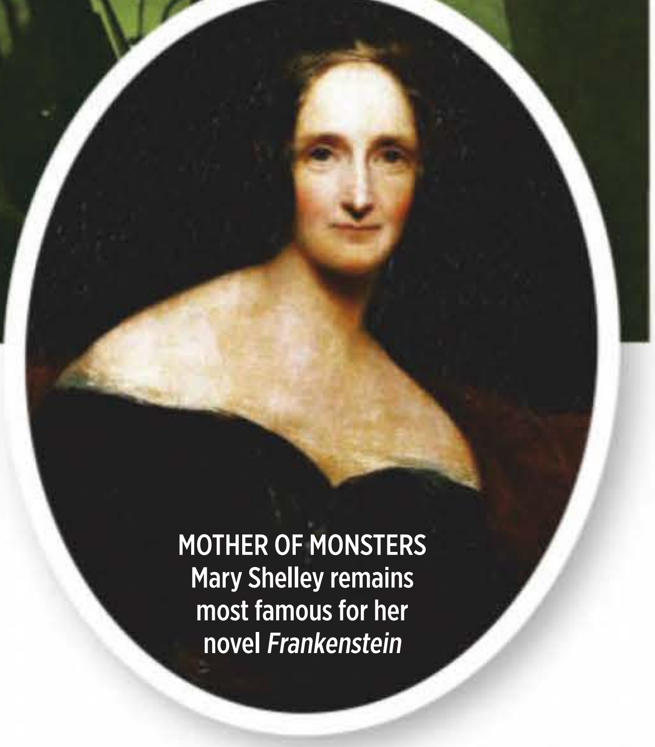
The amount given to Italian explorer John Cabot as a reward for 'discovering' the coast of North America in 1497.

ON THE BIG SCREAM Bela Lugosi, Boris Karloff and Basil Rathbone *(left to right)* starred in the 1939 horror film, *Son of Frankenstein*



MOTHER OF MONSTERS Mary Shelley remains most famous for her novel *Frankenstein*

What inspired Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*?

SHORT ANSWER A wet summer holiday, a writing challenge and a nightmare all led Mary Shelley to cry out: "IT'S ALIVE!"

LONG ANSWER Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin spent the summer of 1816 on holiday near Lake Geneva, Switzerland, with her soon-to-be husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley. The weather was dismal – ash from an Indonesian volcano affected the global climate that year – so they passed the time telling ghost stories.

One day during that 'year without a summer', their dinner host, Romantic poet Lord Byron, issued a challenge to his guests: they each had to come up with a horror story. Eighteen-year-old Mary, with little writing experience and in awe of her esteemed company, struggled to bring any creation to life. That was until one fateful night when she had a nightmare, fuelled by conversations concerning the scientific subject of galvanism, about a man using electricity to give life to dead body tissue.

Mary soon put together the terrifying tale of scientist Dr Victor Frankenstein and his creature made from dug-up corpses. Her gothic masterpiece was published, anonymously, in 1818 under the title *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. It actually wasn't the only story to come out of Lord Byron's contest, as another guest, Dr John Polidori, wrote *The Vampyre* a seminal work that influenced Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

GETTY IMAGES X2

ROCK BOTTOM
Women pick out rocks and dirt from a conveyer belt transporting coal at Bickershaw Colliery

Who were the Pit Brow Lasses?

SHORT ANSWER Soot-covered men who risked their lives underground were not the only workers at Britain's collieries

It wasn't only men who manned Britain's coal mines. Women initially went underground, too, until the Mines and Collieries Act of 1842, which also prohibited all boys under the age of ten from going down the pit. Instead of losing their jobs, women just shifted their occupations above ground.

The so-called 'Pit Brow Lasses' (also known as 'Tip Girls') were stationed at the pit head, or brow, where they loaded the wagons, hauled the coal tubs, and sorted through the coal. There were plenty in 19th-century society who viewed this as wholly unsuitable employment for women – not least because they wore trousers. In 1887, a group of women from Wigan travelled to London in their working clothes to petition the Home Secretary to let them keep working. They were dubbed an "invasion of colliery Amazons", but the protest worked, and the Pit Brow Lasses remained in the country's collieries.

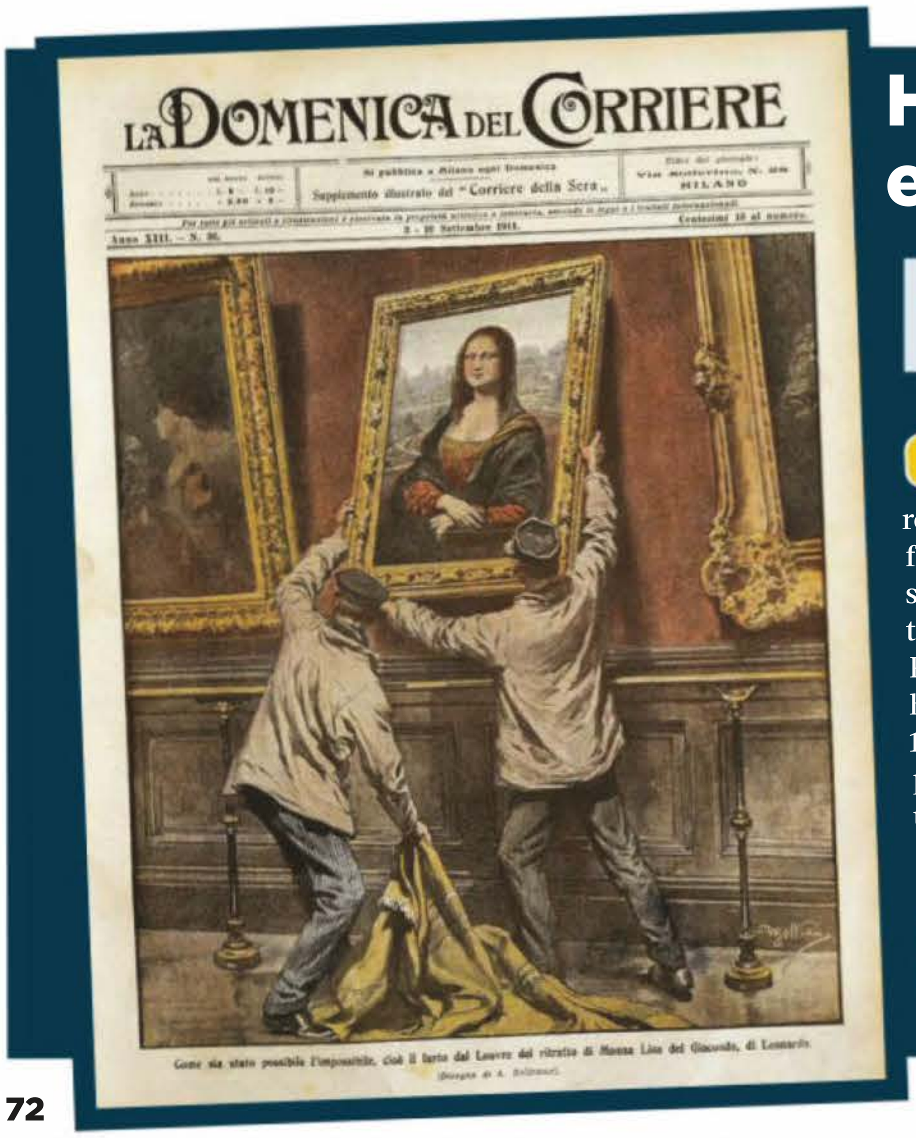
272

The number of words in Abraham Lincoln's famous Gettysburg Address, in which he paid his respects to the fallen Union soldiers.

Is Caesar salad named after Julius Caesar?

SHORT ANSWER The only thing remotely Roman about this salad is romaine lettuce

LONG ANSWER The Caesar salad did get its name from an Italian, just not *that* one. Cesare Cardini emigrated to the United States and opened restaurants in California, before moving on to Mexico in order to get away from the no-booze laws of Prohibition. According to his daughter, Rosa, he invented the salad on 4 July 1924. On a busy American Independence Day, his Tijuana restaurant ran low on ingredients, so he had to improvise a new dish with leftover lettuce, eggs, Parmesan and other bits. Simple as that. Or maybe not, as there are other claims over who tossed the first Caesar salad, with Cardini's brother, Alex, and a young employee named Livio Santini also in the mix. What is certain is that it had nothing to do with Julius Caesar.



LA DOMENICA DEL CORRIERE

Supplemento illustrato del "Corriere della Sera"

MILANO

3 - 10 Settembre 1911.

Come sia stato possibile l'impossibile, cioè il furto dal Louvre del ritratto di Monna Lisa del Giocondo, di Leonardo

Has the 'Mona Lisa' ever been stolen?

SHORT ANSWER Yes – Leonardo da Vinci's mesmerising beauty went missing for two years

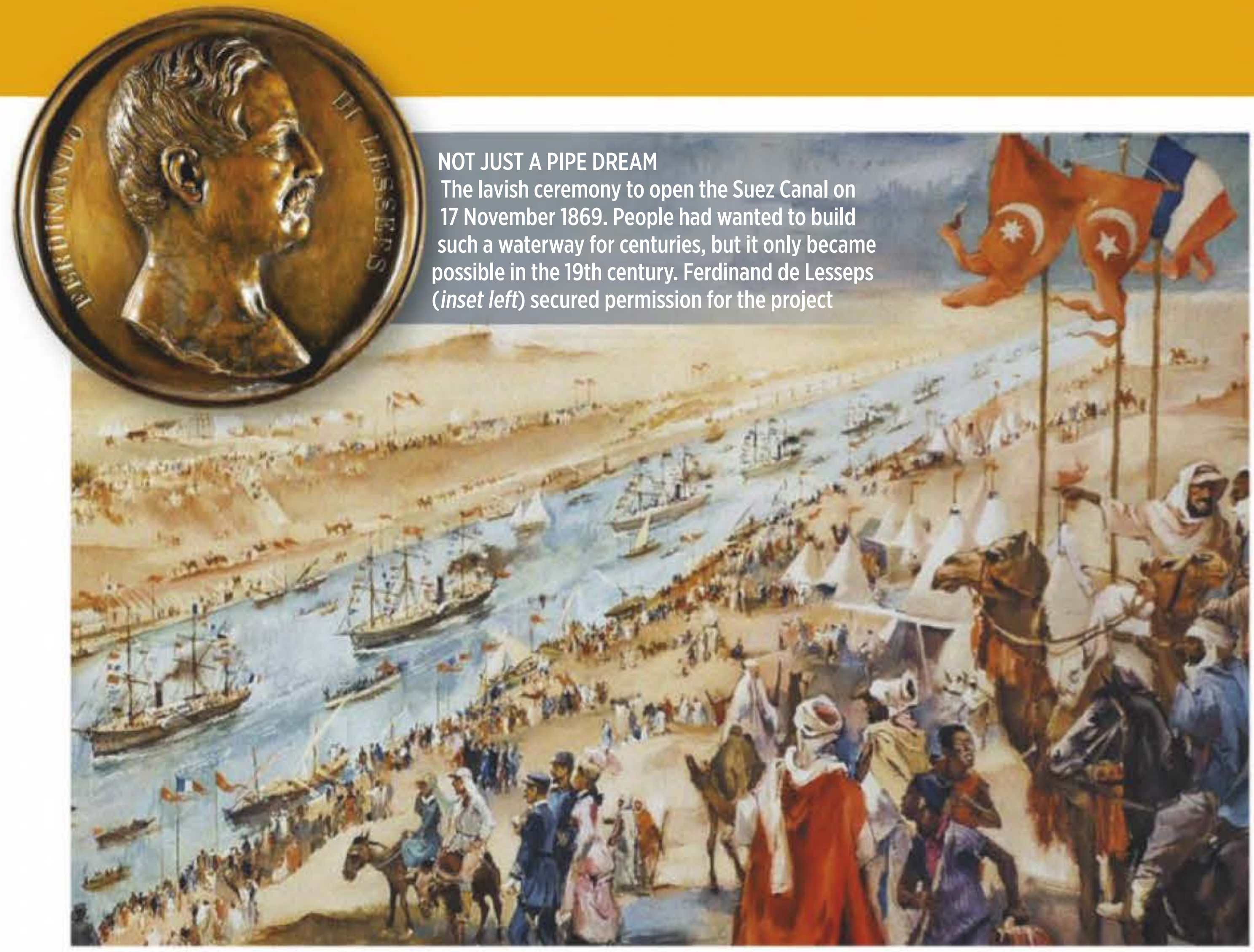
LONG ANSWER It took 24 hours before anyone realised that the 'Mona Lisa', missing from her spot at the Louvre, hadn't simply been taken for cleaning. The thief, an Italian named Vincenzo Peruggia (a former employee) had hidden in a cupboard on 21 August 1911 before removing the famous painting from its frame, shoving it under his white smock and walking out with it the next morning.

Despite the simplicity of the crime, the police investigation failed to get anywhere for two years. Theories and the list of suspects grew ever more wild – even Pablo Picasso was questioned – and the 'Mona Lisa' became the most famous painting in the world. All the while, it was in Peruggia's apartment.

Peruggia's capture came in 1913, when he tried to sell the painting under the not-so-subtle name of Leonardo. He actually became something of a national hero, serving less than a year in prison, as he claimed his intention had been to return the 'Mona Lisa' back to its Italian homeland.

MOANIN' ABOUT LISA
The world was obsessed by the missing 'Mona Lisa', and many theories swirled

GETTY IMAGES X7



NOT JUST A PIPE DREAM
The lavish ceremony to open the Suez Canal on 17 November 1869. People had wanted to build such a waterway for centuries, but it only became possible in the 19th century. Ferdinand de Lesseps (*inset left*) secured permission for the project

When did the Suez Canal open?

SHORT ANSWER An ancient idea needed 19th-century industrialisation for the shipping highway to come into being...

LONG ANSWER By connecting the Mediterranean and Red Seas, the Suez Canal substantially cut maritime routes, so was destined to become a major shipping lane. The 120-mile waterway across the stretch of land linking Africa and Asia opened on 17 November 1869.

Canals had been carved out of that part of land since ancient times, as early as 1850 BC, and hopes of one that cut all the way across had been floated for centuries. But construction hadn't actually got underway until 1859. The former French consul in Cairo, Ferdinand de Lesseps, secured approval for the project from the Egyptian viceroy, Said Pasha, and the newly formed Suez Canal Company was given the right to operate for 99 years once the waterway was completed. Construction took four years longer than estimated due to the climate, terrain, a cholera epidemic, and a ban on the use of forced labour.

Although the French operated the Suez Canal, it was a British ship that had the honour of being first to sail through. The night before the grand opening, the captain of HMS *Newport* sneakily navigated the craft to the front of the queue of vessels under cover of near-total darkness.

DID YOU KNOW?

DIE SMILING

The Greek philosopher Chrysippus is said to have died of laughter. After watching a donkey eat some figs, he collapsed to the floor in hysterics at his own joke. The punchline? He'd offered the animal wine to wash them down with.

GREEDY PIG

The US Navy recruited a pig as a war bond fundraiser during World War II. Dressed in a crown, silver earrings and a robe, the swine, dubbed King Neptune, was taken around Illinois to be 'auctioned', raising $19 million.

SCHOOLBOY REVENGE?

The headmaster of the school where Vladimir Lenin went as a boy was the father of the man who led Russia's Provisional Government – which was overthrown when Lenin led the 1917 October Revolution.

PRUDE OR PRUNES

There have been some strange measures to treat sexually transmitted infections throughout history. In 16th-century England, many believed that prunes had special healing powers, and so they were served in many brothels.

Who was Shaka Zulu?

SHORT ANSWER A warrior ruler who ruthlessly transformed Southern Africa as he built a powerful kingdom

LONG ANSWER The British Army learned just how ferocious the Zulu warriors could be in the 1870s, and that was thanks to the man who turned the Southern African people from a small tribe into a powerful kingdom. The tall, strong warrior Shaka kaSenzangakhona became chief of the Zulu in 1816, and he set about conquering neighbouring lands and peoples.

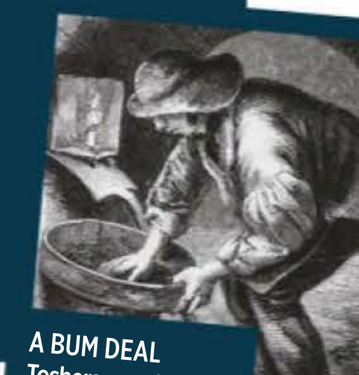
The chief created a fighting force the likes of which the region had never seen before, and he dealt ruthlessly with his enemies. His rule led to a period known as Mfecane, or the Crushing, which saw widespread chaos, warfare and the deaths of perhaps millions of people.

Yet for someone with such a fearsome reputation, the name Shaka – meaning intestinal beetle – seems ill-fitting. Shaka was an illegitimate child, so his father tried to claim his lover's swollen belly had been caused by such a beetle.

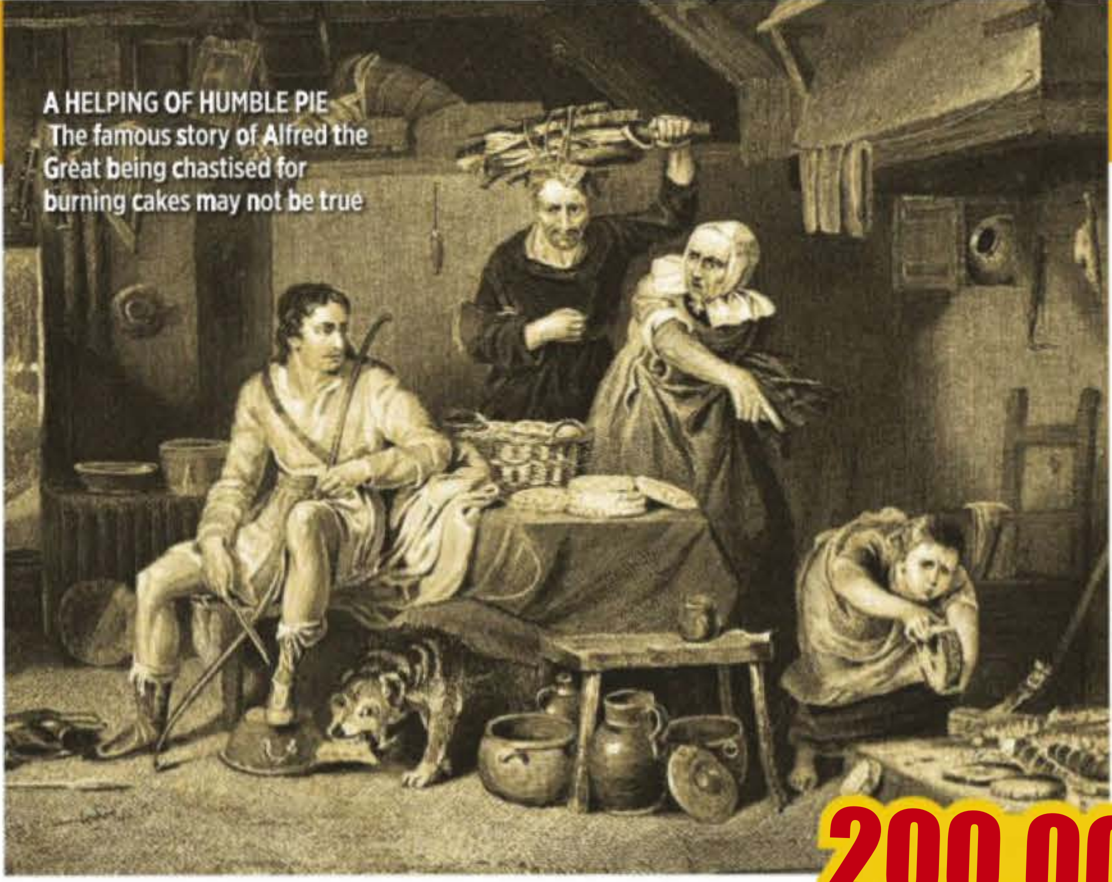
What did toshers do?

SHORT ANSWER Decked out in canvas trousers and aprons, they searched the sewers for anything of value

LONG ANSWER Of history's worst jobs, being a tosher was probably one of the hardest to stomach. Toshers scavenged the sewers of 19th-century London for items to sell – from coins and nails to rope. Dangers included getting lost, being buried by crumbling brickwork, trapped by high tides of water, suffocated by noxious air, and attacked by rats. After 1840, it became illegal to enter the sewers without permission, so they faced arrest, too.



A BUM DEAL
Toshers searched the sewers for treasure



A HELPING OF HUMBLE PIE The famous story of Alfred the Great being chastised for burning cakes may not be true

Did Alfred the Great really burn the cakes?

SHORT ANSWER Perhaps not – and if he did, they weren't cakes anyway

LONG ANSWER A peculiar legend seems to stick to King Alfred the Great, who defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Edington in AD 878 and laid the groundwork for a united England.

According to the tale, when Alfred was down on his luck and pursued by marauding Danes, a peasant woman gave him shelter as he waged a guerrilla-style campaign in the marshes around Athelney, in the Somerset Levels. She told him to keep an eye on the cakes baking on the fire, which would likely have been little more than a simple bread, but he let his mind wander to how to beat the invading force and restore his rule. The cakes burned, and the woman, not knowing his identity, let him have it.

It's a good story – showing Alfred's humility – but one that appeared long after the king's death. So while it might have been passed down by oral tradition, sadly it may only be a half-baked work of fiction.

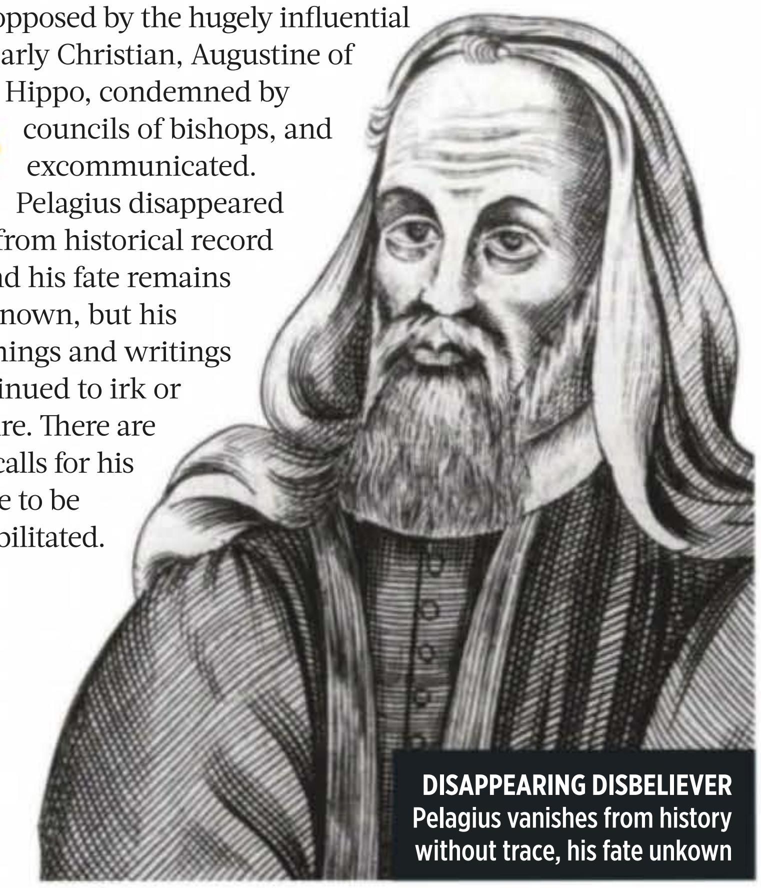
200,000

The number of people at Tyburn who gathered to watch thief and four-time escapee Jack Sheppard hang in 1724.

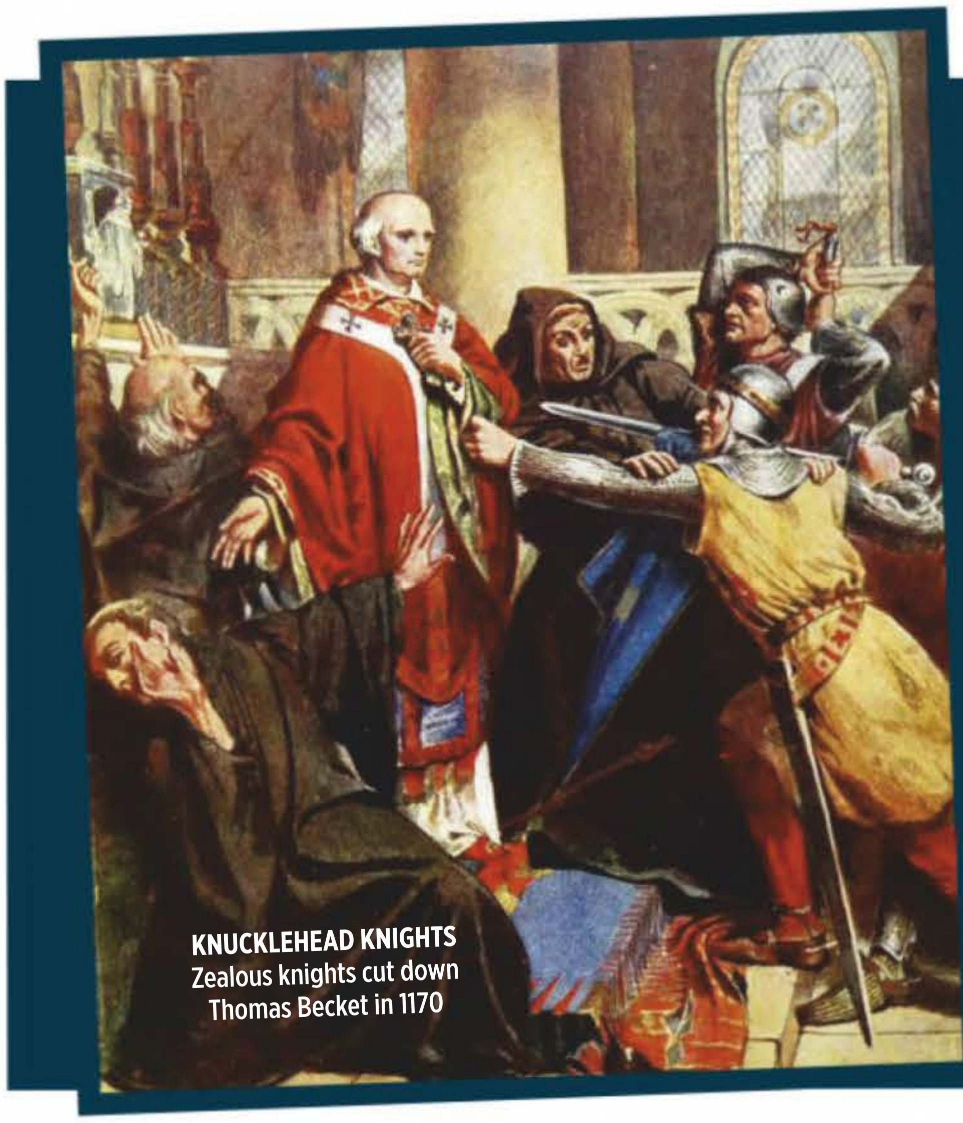
What was the Pelagian Heresy?

SHORT ANSWER The teachings of a British monk caused a stir in a newly Christian-tolerant world

LONG ANSWER While Christianity took off in the Roman Empire and beyond, one fourth-century monk and theologian from the far-off land of Britain threatened the nascent church with his religious views. Pelagius believed in free will, going against the sanctioned ideas of predestination and original sin, and he claimed humans could determine good and evil for themselves without relying on the grace of God. This was dangerous stuff for the church – an institution just getting established with rules and dogma – so he was opposed by the hugely influential early Christian, Augustine of Hippo, condemned by councils of bishops, and excommunicated. Pelagius disappeared from historical record and his fate remains unknown, but his teachings and writings continued to irk or inspire. There are still calls for his name to be rehabilitated.



DISAPPEARING DISBELIEVER Pelagius vanishes from history without trace, his fate unkown



KNUCKLEHEAD KNIGHTS Zealous knights cut down Thomas Becket in 1170

Why was Thomas Becket murdered?

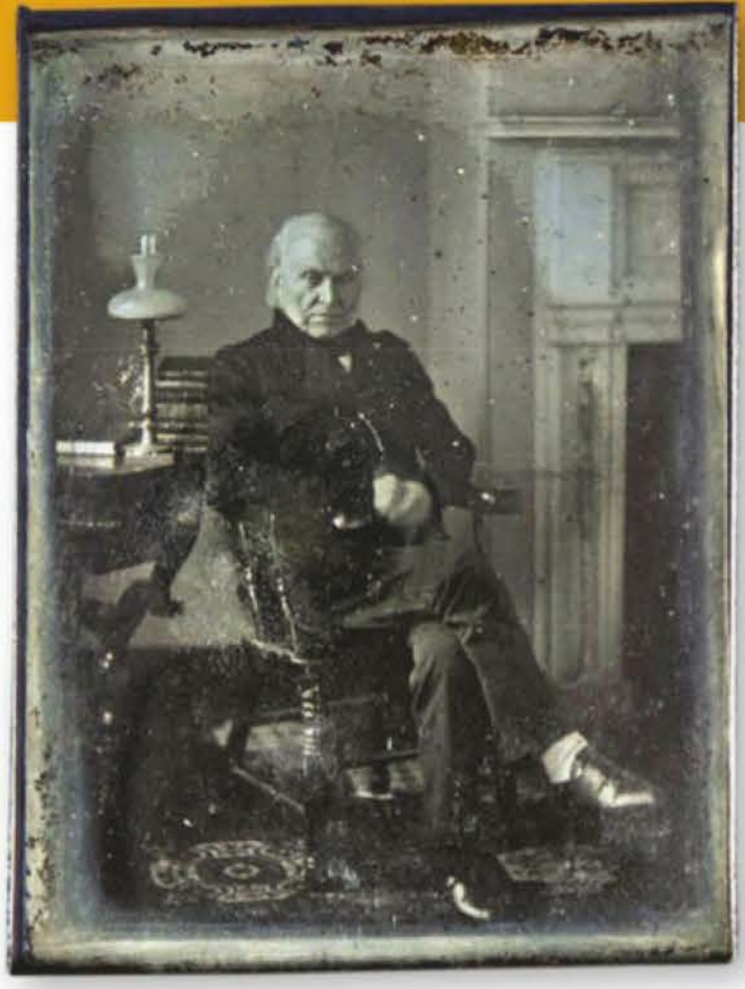
SHORT ANSWER The Archbishop of Canterbury made an enemy out of Henry II, but that didn't mean the king wanted him dead

LONG ANSWER Simply put: some of Henry II's knights were too eager to please, didn't get all the facts, and perhaps didn't understand what a rhetorical question was.

Henry had appointed Thomas Becket as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162, but then the long-time friends – once hunting and chess partners – began quarrelling. Becket served the interests of the Church over Henry's law; things got so bad that Becket temporarily went into exile.

The situation came to a head when, after hearing Becket had made inflammatory comments from the altar on Christmas Day 1170, Henry blurted out: "Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?" Four knights heard this and immediately set out for Canterbury, cutting Becket down in the cathedral and spilling his brains on the floor. Becket was hailed as a martyr and canonised, while the pope sent the four knights to the Holy Land, where they all died.

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2



DON'T SMILE FOR THE CAMERA
President John Quincy Adams looks rather serious in this photo, which was taken in 1843 – 14 years after he'd left the White House

What's the oldest photo of a US president?

SHORT ANSWER The snap was taken in 1843, but it doesn't show the president at the time

LONG ANSWER William Henry Harrison had his snapshot taken during his brief stint as president number nine in 1841, but it didn't survive. So it's the sixth president, John Quincy Adams, who takes the accolade. He was in office from 1825 29, although the daguerreotype in question taken by German born Philip Haas, with a seated Adams looking very serious in his Massachusetts home comes from 1843. At this time, the 76 year old was still in politics as a congressman fighting against slavery. To add another name into the mix, the oldest surviving photo of a president in office is of James Polk, who served from 1845 to 1849.

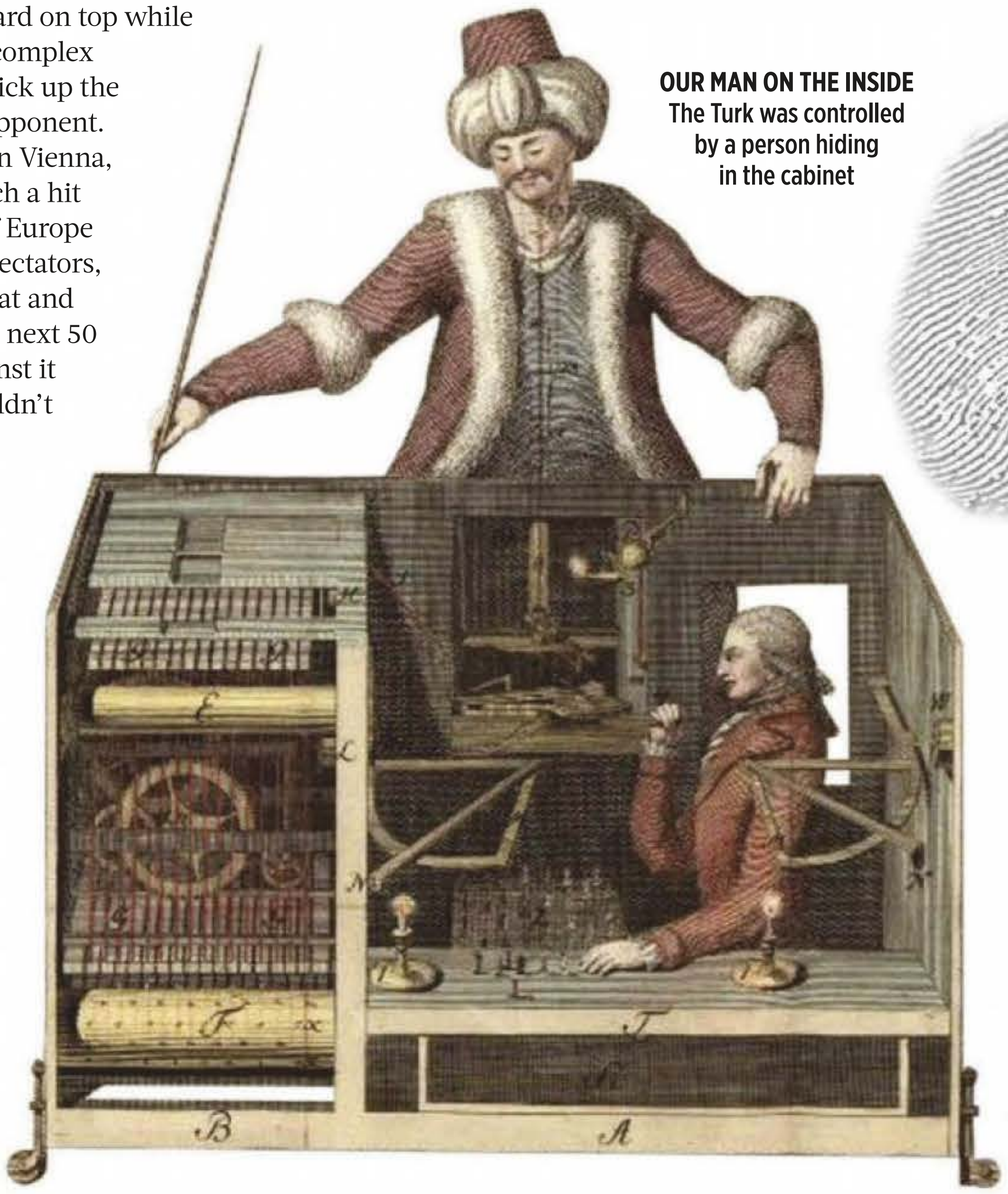
What was the Turk?

SHORT ANSWER A chess-playing automaton with a mind of its own… or was it?

LONG ANSWER Long before Deep Blue beat Garry Kasparov in the 1990s, another chess playing machine was vanquishing all human challengers. The Turk, a mechanical man dressed in robes and a turban, would sit impassively at a cabinet with a chess board on top while its arm moved, thanks to a complex clockwork mechanism, to pick up the pieces and play against its opponent.

Following its 1770 debut in Vienna, Austria, the Turk proved such a hit that it was taken on tours of Europe and America, enthralling spectators, including Catherine the Great and Benjamin Franklin, over the next 50 years. Napoleon played against it three times in 1809 and couldn't win even after cheating.

The inner workings of the Turk had nothing to do with 18th century artificial intelligence, though. The whole thing was an elaborate hoax, invented by Wolfgang von Kempelen, who was born in the Habsburg empire in what is now Slovakia. The Turk was operated by a (human) chess master crammed into the cabinet, with hidden doors, mirrors and magnets to help them watch the game and make their moves. Yet the faux automaton did raise very serious questions over mechanical engineering and the possibility of thinking machines. English mathematician and inventor Charles Babbage the 'father of the computer' developed his Analytical Engine after playing the Turk twice. He lost both times.



OUR MAN ON THE INSIDE
The Turk was controlled by a person hiding in the cabinet

When was the first conviction by fingerprint?

SHORT ANSWER Fingerprinting made its mark – in more ways than one – on criminal detection in the early years of the 20th century

LONG ANSWER Although the importance of fingerprints was recognised in antiquity, when they made for good signatures, it wasn't until the late 19th century that people became serious about using them as a means of identification. One of those was Scottish surgeon Henry Faulds, who, after being snubbed by the Metropolitan Police, sought help from none other than Charles Darwin. In turn, Darwin handed over the idea to his cousin, an anthropologist called Francis Galton, who calculated that the chance of two people having the same fingerprints was one in 64 billion. Not even identical twins had the same prints.

The growing body of work surrounding the subject caught the attention of Sir Edward Henry at the Met, and he put fingerprint identification into practice. In 1902, it nabbed its first criminal: 41-year-old labourer Harry Jackson, sentenced to seven years in prison for the crime of stealing billiard balls. And in 1905, fingerprints ensured the arrest of brothers Albert and Alfred Stratton, for murder.

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ONE TO WATCH

The group of retired Vietnam War veterans share an emotional moment alongside Paul's son, David, (*far right*) played by Jonathan Majors

Fire and fury

Da 5 Bloods / Netflix, streaming now

Clarke Peters' Otis (*front left*) and Delroy Lindo's Paul (*right*) share a heated exchange of words in *Da 5 Bloods*

Even today, 45 years after the fall of Saigon, the trauma of the Vietnam War remains vivid in the US. It was a conflict that, as recorded on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, claimed the lives of 58,318 Americans. Yet not all parts of American society were affected equally. African-American troops – many of whom were posted to the front line after being drafted – made up a disproportionate number of these casualties.

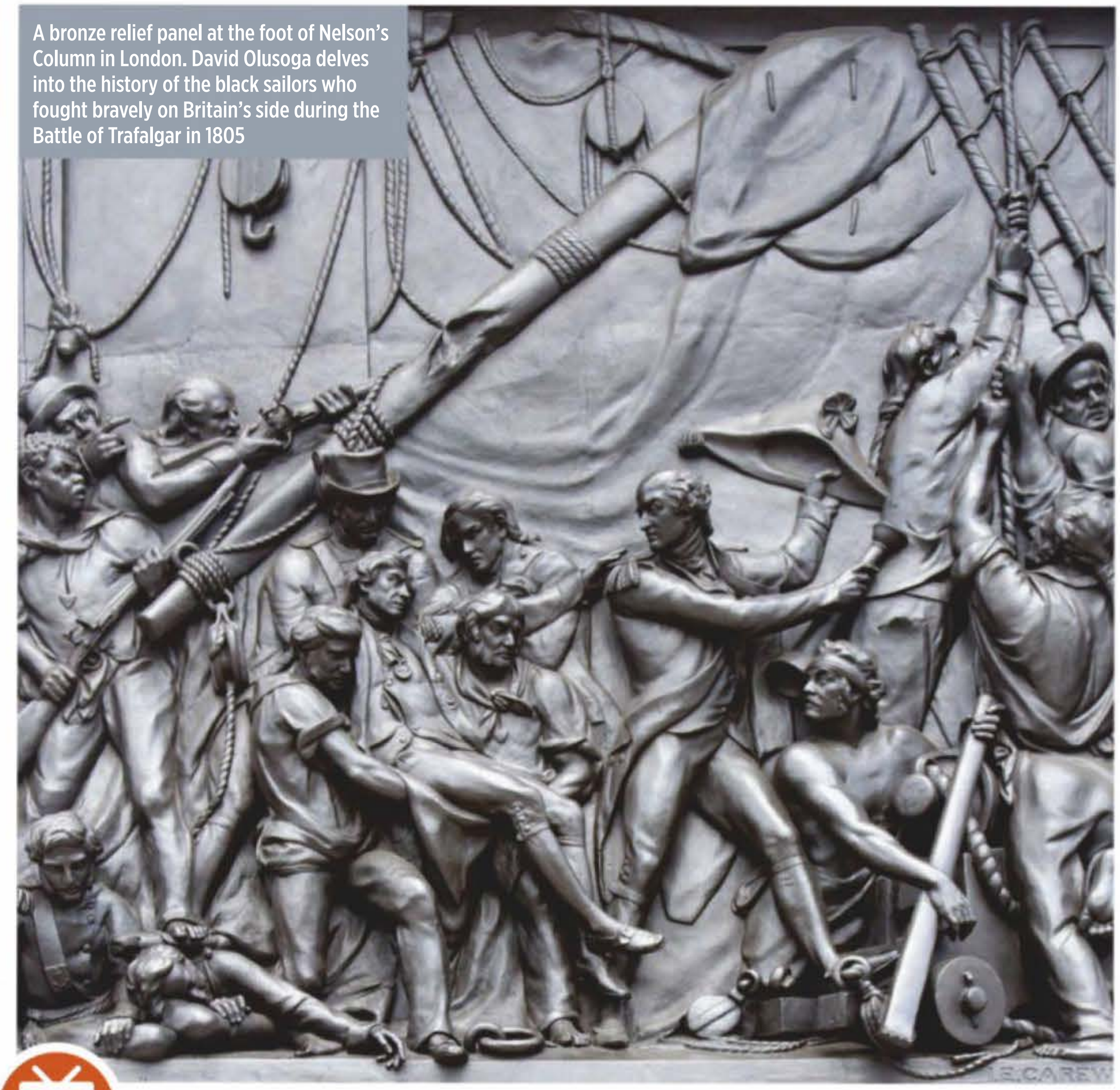
The experiences of four such troops lie at the centre of director Spike Lee's searing and satirical feature for Netflix. It begins with veterans Paul (Delroy Lindo), Otis (Clarke Peters), Melvin (Isiah Whitlock Jr) and Eddie (Norm Lewis) meeting in Ho Chi Minh City. It's the first step in a journey in search of a shallow grave in the jungle where their squad leader, Norman (Chadwick Boseman), lies buried, and seems to herald a movie where a group of ageing men gently make peace with the past.

This is a feint. The quartet haven't just returned to Asia to honour a fallen comrade. Norman's shallow grave lies close to a cache of bullion that the men's younger selves stumbled upon in a plane wreck. As Lee deftly references gung-ho Second World War action flicks, sombre Vietnam dramas and John Huston's fable of greed, *The Treasure Of The Sierra Madre*, a wholly different picture emerges.

Unleashing the acid-frazzled and experimental spirit of the late 1960s, the director ratchets up the strangeness and gleefully confounds audience expectations. For instance, he doesn't de-age the quartet in flashback scenes; perhaps to emphasise how the four men have idealised their forever young leader, Norman.

But for all his knowing cinematic playfulness, Lee ultimately has a serious point to make, one signposted by archive footage of Martin Luther King Jr and Muhammad Ali: that the African-American experience of the Vietnam War and its aftermath was specific and, compounded by racism that endures to this day, brutalising.

NETFLIX/DAVID LEE X2



A bronze relief panel at the foot of Nelson's Column in London. David Olusoga delves into the history of the black sailors who fought bravely on Britain's side during the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805

Amplifying voices

Black And British: A Forgotten History

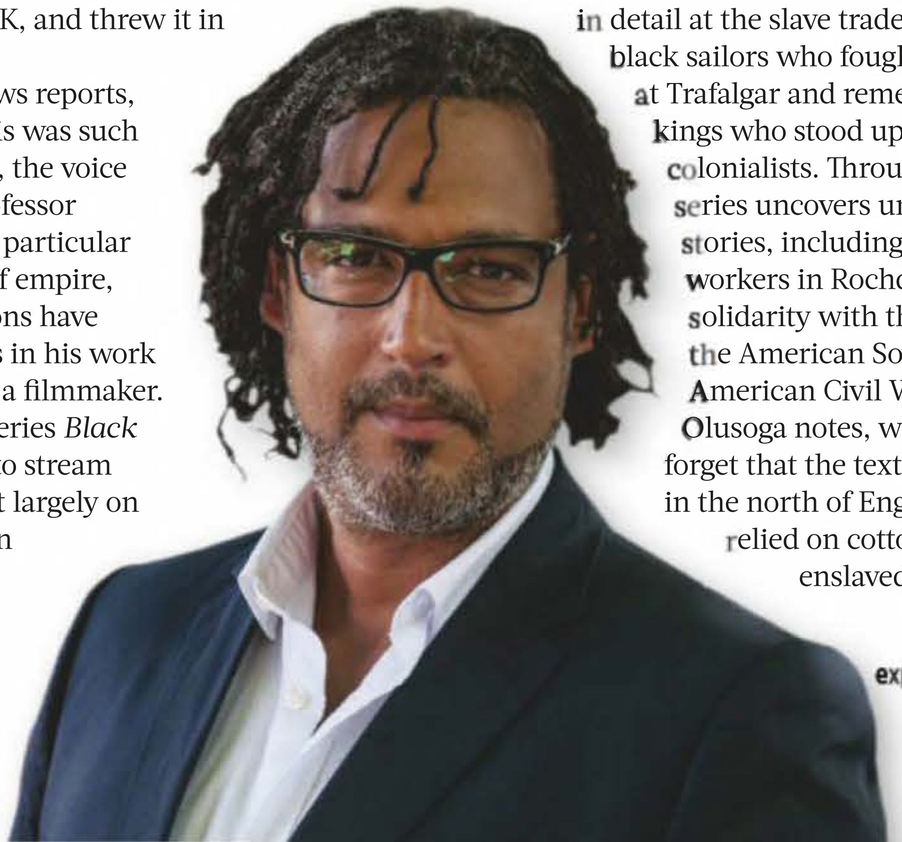
/ streaming now via BBC iPlayer

The death of George Floyd during his arrest by Minneapolis police on 25 May gave urgent new impetus to the Black Lives Matter campaign, not just in the US but around the world. On 7 June, protestors toppled a Victorian era statue of slave trader Edward Colston (1636 1721) that stood in Bristol, UK, and threw it in the harbour.

Of those who, in news reports, contextualised why this was such an important moment, the voice of British Nigerian Professor David Olusoga carried particular weight. The histories of empire, slavery and black Britons have been recurring themes in his work as an academic and as a filmmaker.

His four part 2016 series *Black And British*, available to stream via BBC iPlayer, is built largely on the idea that there is an enduring relationship between Britain and people with origins in Africa and that too much of that relationship remains untold or misunderstood. It's a story that dates back at least to Roman times when, as Olusoga notes in the first episode, the troops guarding the frontier on Hadrian's Wall included men born in Africa.

Elsewhere in the series, Olusoga looks in detail at the slave trade, salutes the black sailors who fought for Britain at Trafalgar and remembers African kings who stood up against colonialists. Throughout, the series uncovers unexpected stories, including how mill workers in Rochdale showed solidarity with the enslaved in the American South during the American Civil War. Equally, Olusoga notes, we shouldn't forget that the textiles industry in the north of England long relied on cotton farmed by enslaved people.



David Olusoga is an expert on the histories of black Britons

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X3, BBC/ALICE DOYARD X1, BBC/LOOKOUT POINT X1

Survivors Albert, Annie and Helene (*left to right*) share their experiences

Survival stories

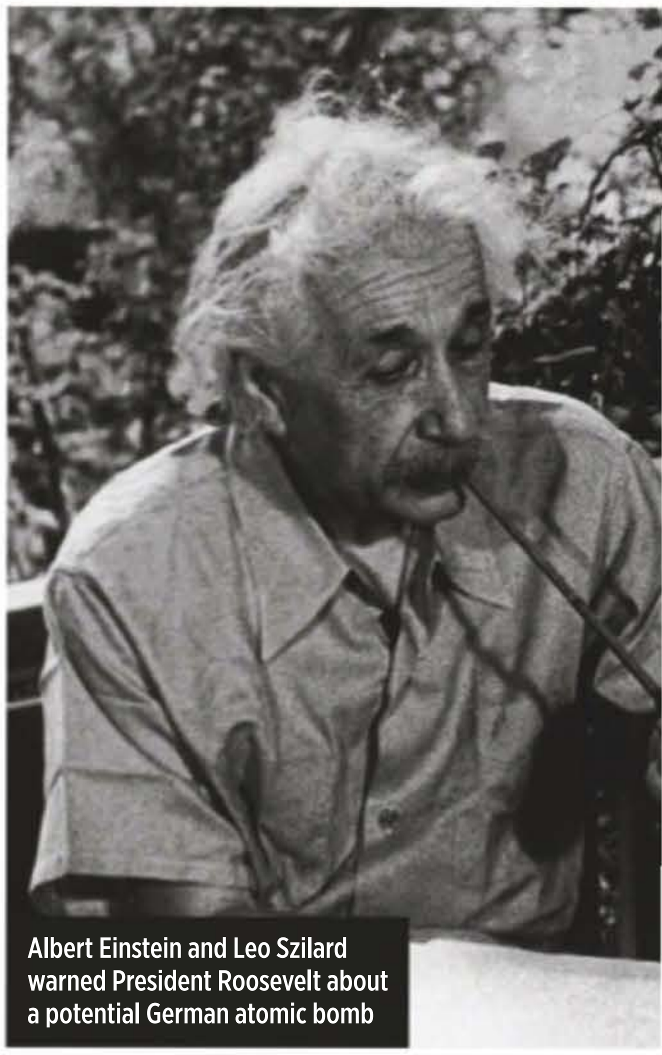
Confined: Hidden Children

/ BBC World Service, 21 July

In occupied France in 1942, Jewish people were being hunted. Those caught faced the horrors of concentration camps, as did those who helped them. Despite the dangers, Sister Denise Bergon decided to take a stand and, over a two-year period, saved the lives of over 80 Jewish children, hiding them in the convent boarding school of Notre Dame de Massip.

This courageous action was even more remarkable because the school was in Capdenac, in the south of France – a strategically important town because of its railway junction, and where a locally based SS division would become notorious for its atrocities.

As part of a moving documentary, presenter Alice Doyard meets three of the survivors – Albert Seifer, and sisters Annie Beck and Helene Ulrich – and hears their affecting stories.



Albert Einstein and Leo Szilard warned President Roosevelt about a potential German atomic bomb

Cusp of change

A Suitable Boy / BBC One, July

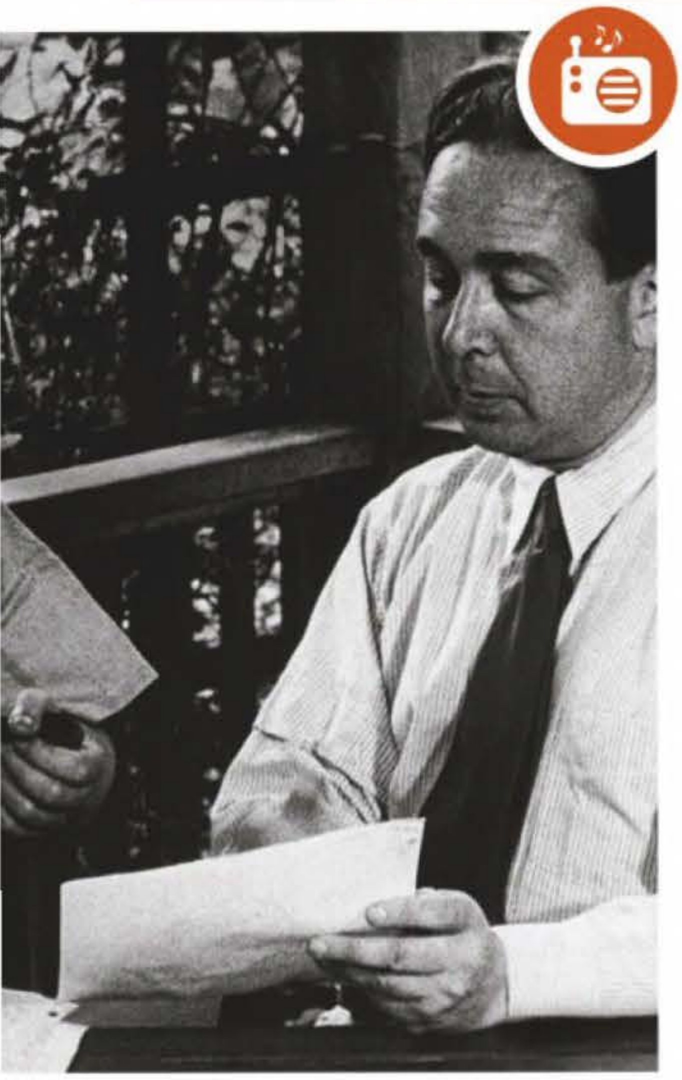
As the 1950s dawned, India was a nation on the brink of transformation. Behind it lay years of British colonial rule and the furies unleashed by Partition; ahead loomed the country's first democratic general election, which would confirm Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) as prime minister. It's this era that Vikram Seth chose as the backdrop for his 1993 novel *A Suitable Boy*; a behemoth of over 1,300 pages charting the interlinked stories of four families over a few turbulent months.

Somehow, perhaps drawing on his experience adapting Leo Tolstoy's similarly epic *War And Peace* for the BBC, scriptwriter Andrew Davies has condensed the book into six episodes, brought to the screen by director Mira Nair. It's a series that looks set to be one of the television highlights of 2020, and not just because of the talent involved. Seth's original text balances big themes and events with domestic-sized detail, a combination that should lend itself beautifully to television.

At the centre of the drama lies university student Lata (Tanya Maniktala). Lata longs for adventure, romance and self-discovery, but her mother has clear ideas about Lata's future: the "suitable boy" of the title refers to her mother's efforts to find a match for Lata.

In a parallel story that also touches on the tensions between tradition and modernity, hedonistic politician's son Maan (Ishaan Khatter), who's related by marriage to Lata, also pushes back against his parents via a potentially scandalous infatuation with a beautiful courtesan, Saeeda Bai (Bollywood legend Tabu).

Ishaan Khatter's Maan (*left*) is love-struck by Tabu's Saeeda Bai (*right*). Their story embodies the tension between tradition and modernity that the show explores



Harbinger of doom

Chain Reaction / BBC World Service
1 & 8 August, podcast from 1 August

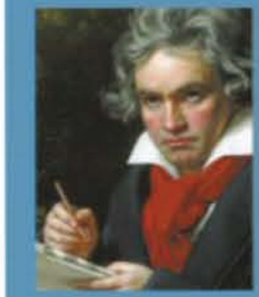
It was Budapest born physicist and inventor Leo Szilard (1898-1964) who, in a moment of inspiration, first realised the terrible destructive possibilities of harnessing nuclear power. An exile from Nazism living in London, Szilard first had to convince the British government to patent his idea for a "nuclear bomb" secretly, and then worked on techniques to make such a devastatingly powerful device possible.

However, it was actually German scientists who began to take a lead in developing nuclear weapons. This in turn led to Szilard, now residing in New York, to ask an old friend by the name of Albert Einstein for help: he wanted to persuade US President Franklin D Roosevelt to prioritise developing nuclear fission. The research was later key to the Manhattan Project the programme that ultimately resulted in America dropping two atomic bombs on Japan.

Marking the 75th anniversary of the US deploying 'Little Boy' at Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, *Chain Reaction* charts Szilard's remarkable life, which saw him try to stop the US from using the nuclear weapons he had done so much to develop. The series is presented by Emily Strasser, a writer and journalist whose grandfather worked on the Manhattan Project.

Music against the odds

Being Beethoven
/ BBC Four, July



Part of the *Beethoven Unleashed* season marking 250 years since the composer's birth, this three part series looks at Beethoven's life. It's a story of contrasts: while he gave the world a slew of masterpieces, Beethoven himself was a troubled individual.

His father, who first taught the young composer music, was an abusive alcoholic. In later life, Beethoven created music despite progressive hearing loss, and he became embroiled in a custody battle regarding his nephew, Karl.

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

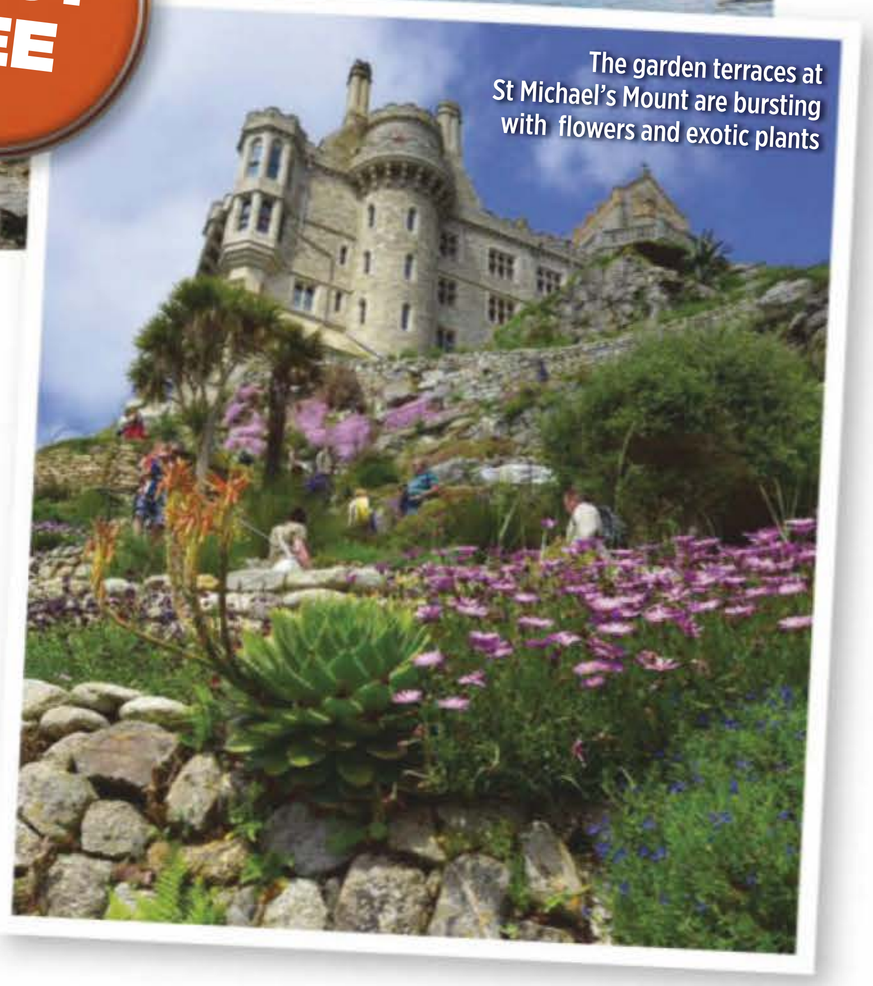
WHAT TO SEE AND WHERE TO VISIT IN THE WIDER WORLD OF HISTORY

HISTORY OUTDOORS

As lockdown in England continues to ease, some historical hotspots are opening their doors once more

St Michael's Mount is accessible via a cobbled causeway

MUST SEE



The garden terraces at St Michael's Mount are bursting with flowers and exotic plants

WHAT'S OPEN

- ✔ Garden terraces, outdoor parts of the island & causeway
- ✔ Food & drink takeaway pop-up
- ✔ Toilets
- ✔ Car park

St Michael's Mount

CORNWALL, NATIONAL TRUST

https://bit.ly/2Y1e7uf

Rising from the sea, carpeted in verdant greenery and topped with an enigmatic stone castle, it's perhaps no wonder that St Michael's Mount is steeped in legend. For instance, the huge stone heart of Cormoran, the giant who supposedly built the island, lies on the cobbled causeway that leads to the mount. Some say if you stand on the stone, you can still make out his heartbeat.

The island is littered with pieces of history: the stone priory and church were built by zealous monks in the 12th century, while the battlements hint at St Michael Mount's bloody past. Soldiers marched on the mount during the Wars of the Roses and again during the British Civil Wars.

The castle remains closed to visitors, but the causeway and the island's outdoor spaces have been reopened including the garden terraces. After walking across the cobbled causeway (generally accessible for around four hours a day due to the tides; there are currently no boats operating), visitors can stroll through the harbour and village at their leisure.

Access to the garden terraces is for 45 minutes, in timed slots, along a one way route. Highlights include the Tortoise Lawn the third Lady St Levan gave her pet tortoise free rein of the lawn in the 1960s which offers a glorious view of the sea. The Top Walled Garden is another popular spot: the intricate planting there forms a wave pattern that mirrors the water below. Sun worshippers will love the West Terraces, where temperatures can reach over 35°C; the planting is suitably tropical, including a giant agave.

You can also enjoy some takeaway refreshments in the Garden Lawn, which boasts excellent coastal views. A limited Plant Sales is in operation, too, for any green fingered visitors.

Please note: tickets must be booked online at least two hours before visiting St Michael's Mount. National Trust members can visit free, and there are a number of free tickets each day for NHS workers. Car parking is available in the seafront car park (signposted to Marazion) for £4 a day, and NHS workers can park there for free with valid ID.

WHEN VISITING OUTDOOR SPACES, PLEASE FOLLOW OFFICIAL SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES
DETAILS ACCURATE AT TIME OF WRITING – CHECK INDIVIDUAL WEBSITES FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION BEFORE TRAVELLING

ALAMY X2, NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/CHRIS LACEY X2, GEOGRAPH/MAT FISCIONE X1, GEOGRAPH/MICHAEL GARLICK X1

One of Oxburgh Hall's gardens. The estate has a mixture of formal gardens and wild areas

WHAT'S OPEN

- ✔ Gardens & parkland
- ✔ Toilets ✔ Car park

Oxburgh Hall

NORFOLK, NATIONAL TRUST

https://bit.ly/2UMxOE3

Occupied by the Bedingfeld family for 500 years, Oxburgh Hall's chequered history is part of the building's fabric – from sumptuous bedchambers that commemorate royal visits to the tiny priest hole that's hidden by a trapdoor in the garderobe.

The house isn't currently open to visitors, but the gardens and extensive parklands are accessible to the public. You won't want to miss the Parterre, affectionately known by the Bedingfelds as the 'French Garden'. Each June, gardeners pack more than 6,500 blooms into this space, resulting in a riot of colour and fragrance. And for those who want to take a walk on the wilder side, the Wilderness, full of evergreen plants, sweet-smelling shrubs and lime trees, is also open.

Tickets must be purchased by 3pm the day before your visit (they're free for National Trust members), and the on-site car park is free for anyone with a ticket.

Brodsworth Hall and Gardens

SOUTH YORKSHIRE, ENGLISH HERITAGE

https://bit.ly/3foWgTS

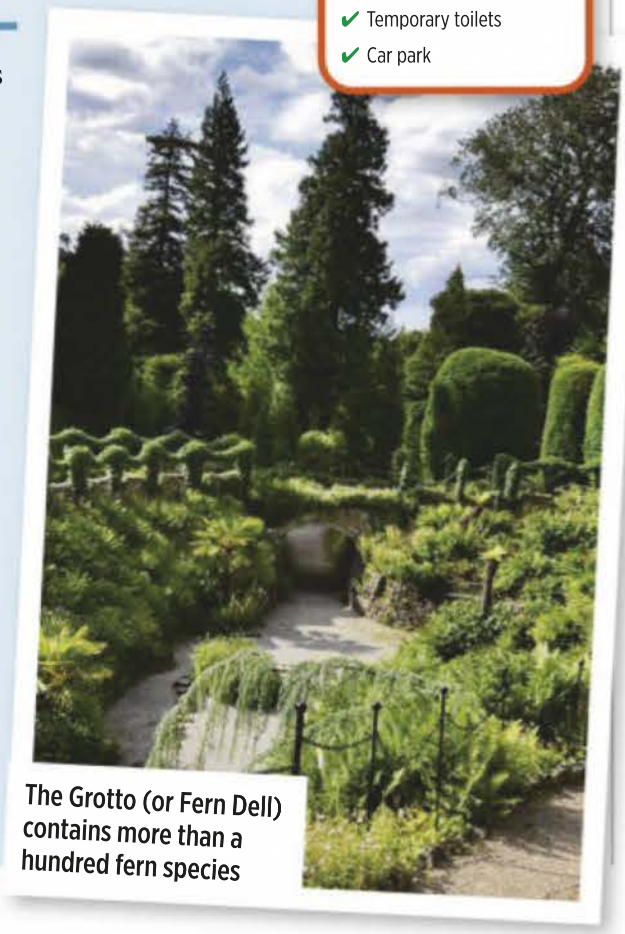
WHAT'S OPEN

- ✔ Grounds & gardens
- ✔ Takeaway café
- ✔ Temporary toilets
- ✔ Car park

Brodsworth Hall and Gardens serves as a window onto the past. Managed as a 'conserved as found' estate, the Hall has been kept exactly as it was left by its last occupier, Sylvia Grant-Dalton, in 1988, and the gardens have been restored to their Victorian glory.

Although the Hall remains closed, visitors can stroll through the gardens – although please note a one-way system is in operation. The Grotto (or Fern Dell) is a must-see: an old quarry has been transformed into an amazing green space that's planted with more than a hundred types of ferns.

You can also stop off for takeaway refreshments in the outdoor seating area. You must purchase tickets in advance of your visit; although tickets are free for English Heritage members, they still need to book.



The Grotto (or Fern Dell) contains more than a hundred fern species

Burrough Hill Iron Age Hill Fort

LEICESTERSHIRE

https://bit.ly/37wD6si

Burrough Hill Iron Age Hill Fort is renowned as Leicestershire's most impressive surviving univallate (single banked) hill fort. Various archaeological digs have revealed that the area was occupied in some form from 4000 BC up to perhaps the fifth century AD.

The hill fort has had some rather unusual uses during later centuries, too. It was the site of a fairground in the medieval period and, in the 19th century, the Melton Hunt put on steeplechases there.

Visitors are able to walk up to the ancient hill fort and enjoy the country park. Trekking up to it offers unparalleled views of the surrounding area: the land it's built on reaches almost 700 feet.

The pay and display car park is open from dawn until dusk every day, but all other facilities, including toilets, remain closed.

WHAT'S OPEN

- ✔ Grounds ✔ Car park

A toposcope – a display highlighting notable landmarks on the horizon – can be found on the southwestern rampart of the Iron Age hill fort

Fell Foot

CUMBRIA, NATIONAL TRUST

https://bit.ly/2Y1HwV2

The rugged parkland and glorious lakeside vistas have earned Fell Foot a reputation as one of the jewels in the Lake District's crown. The estate has a fascinating history, too. Its main claim to fame is being one of the area's earliest classic villa landscapes; in the late 1800s, the Dixon family transformed Fell Foot from a homely farmhouse to an opulent villa.

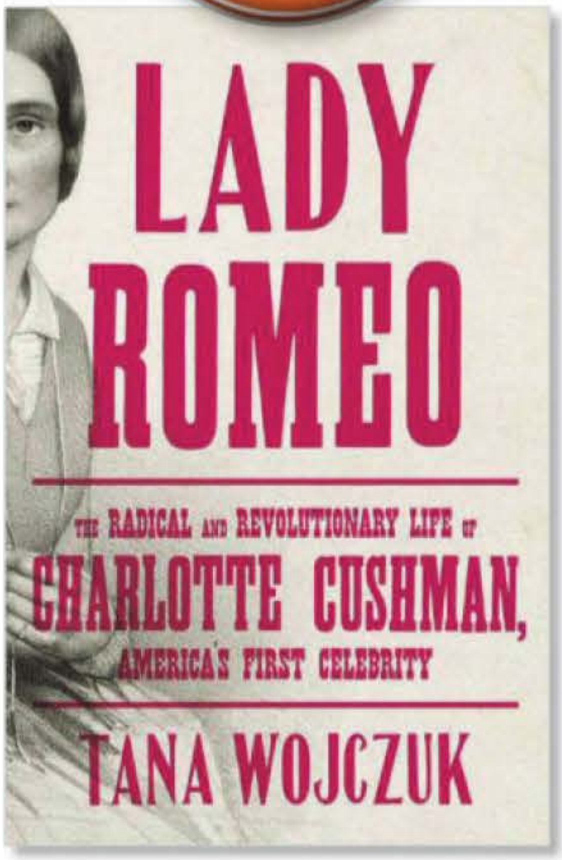
The parkland, lake and meadows (which should be brimming with wildflowers) are now open for visitors to enjoy. Tickets must be booked in advance (National Trust members don't need to pay), and the car park is open from 10am to 6pm.

WHAT'S OPEN

- ✔ Meadows, parkland & lake
- ✔ Toilets ✔ Car park

Visitors to Fell Foot admire the breathtaking views of Lake Windermere

BOOK OF THE MONTH


LADY ROMEO
THE RADICAL AND REVOLUTIONARY LIFE OF
CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN,
AMERICA'S FIRST CELEBRITY
TANA WOJCZUK

Lady Romeo: The Radical and Revolutionary Life of Charlotte Cushman, America's First Celebrity

By Tana Wojczuk
Simon & Schuster, £20, hardback, 240 pages

The 19th century American actress Charlotte Cushman found fame at an early age, and she went on to play some of Shakepeare's greatest roles indeed, her performance as Romeo, alongside her sister as Juliet, gives this book its title. But the highs and lows extended beyond the stage; as this biography notes, "If Cushman's life were a play, it would begin like something out of Shakespeare." Delving into Cushman's formative years, her passionate queer romances, and her legions of adoring fans, it's an extraordinary story.

> "A confident, clever woman who played men's roles not as titillation, but by taking gender itself as a performance"

TANA WOJCZUK explores the life of celebrated gender-bending American actress Charlotte Cushman and considers how Victorian moralists sought to suppress her trailblazing history

What first drew you to write a biography of Charlotte Cushman?

I was researching a book about Shakespeare in America when I discovered this forgotten tradition of women playing men's roles, which they called 'breeches parts'. Charlotte Cushman was unique: she was a believable Romeo, a sex symbol to women, and a magnificent actress. I wanted to know what people such as Abraham Lincoln and Louisa May Alcott saw in her, and why she was later forgotten. A few scholars have studied Cushman's queer identity and female friendships but I also wanted to understand how audiences saw her gender bending, her queerness, and her immense talent.

What were her major claims to fame?

Behind the scenes she was funny, generous with her money and her time, and loyal to her friends but on stage she was an immensely talented tragedian. She remade the role of Lady Macbeth into a powerhouse; her male co stars were actually afraid of her. She later went on to become famous for playing Romeo in London, with her sister as Juliet. Queen Victoria came to see her and praised her acting though she couldn't get past Cushman's manliness.

In America, Cushman played for Lincoln at a fundraiser for the Union during the Civil War, and Walt Whitman and many others thought she helped to define what American culture should look like. She was so successful that by the end of her life she was famous for being famous.

Was Cushman ahead of her time?

To her contemporaries, she was a radical: a confident, clever woman who played men's roles not as a titillation, but by taking gender itself as a performance and excelling at it. In her private life, she was also subversive: she learned to negotiate contracts, managed her money and gave loans to friends – none of which were 'feminine' habits. When she became a star, she grew even more free and radical. She and some female artist friends moved to Rome and established an artist colony. They dreamed of a time when women wouldn't be defined by marriage, but by their friendships and their ambition.

What lessons does Cushman's story have for us today, in 2020?

Representation in history is important. Archives are constructed based on what historians think is worth saving – it's not objective. Cushman's queer identity made her inconvenient for Victorian biographers and, once her audience died, her story was nearly lost with them. We need to know that history has been made by people who don't look like the mainstream, so we can understand that this mainstream is a dangerous fiction.

Cushman's story is about the birth of American culture – and about popular, populist Shakespeare. But it's also a tale of a remarkably complex, blossoming era that existed before the Civil War, and Victorian moralists quashed it. Cushman's story is in many ways a modern one, and it gives us a vision of what it means to be driven by ambition; not for glory alone, but for economic stability and the ability to take care of the people we love.

Charlotte Cushman's masculine features and strong physique helped make her an attractive man on stage, in roles such as Romeo

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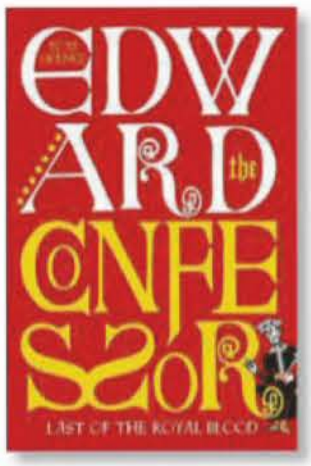
SIX MORE BOOKS TO READ



Edward the Confessor: Last of the Royal Blood

By Tom Licence
Yale University Press, £25, hardback, 384 pages

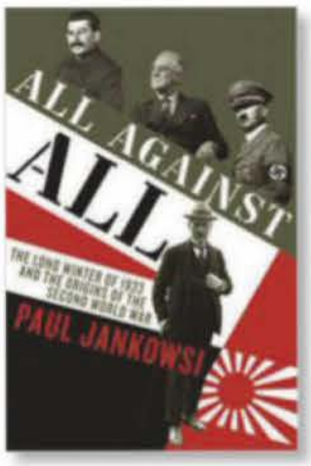
If you know anything about 11th century English king Edward the Confessor at all, it's likely to do with his death: after he passed, his spot on the throne was taken by Harold Godwinson, who was promptly killed by William the Conqueror. This biography sets this skewed view to rights, exploring Edward's long life and reign and answering some key questions along the way. Exactly how successful was he as king? Why did he have no direct heir? And what led to him earning the sobriquet 'the Confessor'? (Spoiler: it wasn't about him blabbing everyone's secrets…)

The Berlin Shadow: Living with the Ghosts of the Kindertransport

By Jonathan Lichtenstein
Scribner, £16.99, hardback, 320 pages

Jonathan Lichtenstein's father, Hans, was among the 10,000 children evacuated from Nazi occupied Europe in the months leading up to the outbreak of World War II. His experiences, and the ways in which they affected the rest of his life and his family, form the centrepiece of this moving book. As Jonathan joins his father to recreate his journey in reverse, back to Berlin, this part history, part memoir becomes an intimate exploration of time, family, and grief.

The BERLIN SHADOW
Living With the Ghosts of the Kindertransport
JONATHAN LICHTENSTEIN


ALL AGAINST ALL
THE LONG WINTER OF 1933 AND THE ORIGINS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR
PAUL JANKOWSKI

All Against All: The Long Winter of 1933 and the Origins of the Second World War

By Paul Jankowski
Profile Books, £25, hardback, 480 pages

We know now that the 1930s ended with the world in the grip of a devastating global war. But hindsight sometimes makes history feel inevitable, when, in fact, each decision or event could have radically changed the outcome. This account of the months from November 1932 to April 1933 charts the string of circumstances Hitler's rise; growing tensions between France, Britain and America that built to create a disastrous whole.

Nicholas Vincent
JOHN
An Evil King?

John: An Evil King?

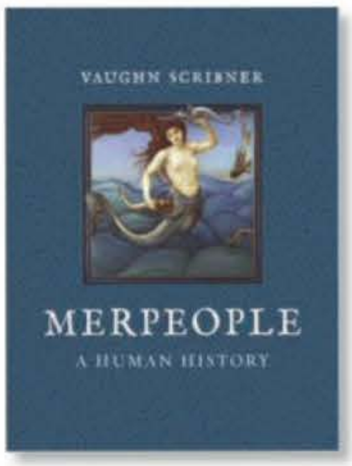
By Nicholas Vincent
Allen Lane, £14.99, hardback, 160 pages

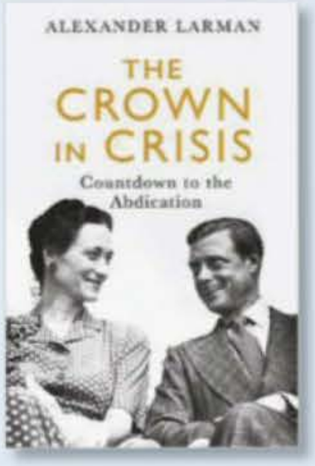
It's fair to say that King John doesn't have the best reputation indeed, he's often depicted as an outright villain. But is this portrayal really fair? In the latest in the ongoing Penguin Monarch series of compact, considered royal biographies, Nicholas Vincent casts a scholarly eye over the evidence. From his early life and coronation to the event that defines John's reign, the 1215 sealing of Magna Carta, Vincent profiles the king and his personality, asking whether his image as a cruel and duplicitous monarch really holds up. It's an eye-opening, fascinating read.

Merpeople: A Human History

By Vaughn Scribner
Reaktion Books, £20, hardback, 320 pages

The image of a mermaid or, less frequently, a merman perched on a rock, luring sailors to either danger or destiny, is weaved throughout human history. In 1493, Christopher Columbus saw what he believed to be three mermaids off the coast of the Dominican Republic ("not half as beautiful as they are painted," he is said to have sniffed). This visual history plunges into the representations of merpeople throughout the ages, from Homer and Hans Christian Anderson to the 1984 film *Splash* set to receive a Channing Tatum-starring remake.



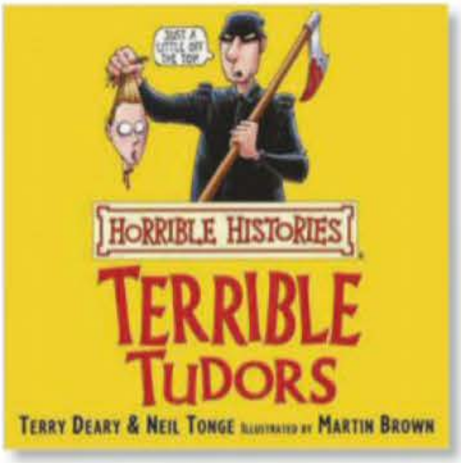


The Crown in Crisis: Countdown to the Abdication

By Alexander Larman
Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £20, hardback, 352 pages

Both a sharply drawn character study, complete with an introductory guide to its cast of characters, and an account of a pivotal moment for the royal family, this is an enthralling look at the abdication of Edward VIII. Drawing on newly available archival sources, Alexander Larman charts the events of 1936 with a dynamic sense of drama. If it doesn't exactly exonerate Edward for whom Larman has little sympathy it surely offers new insights into the episode.

OUR PICK OF AUDIO BOOKS


JUST A LITTLE OFF THE TOP
HORRIBLE HISTORIES
TERRIBLE TUDORS
TERRY DEARY & NEIL TONGE ILLUSTRATED BY MARTIN BROWN

Terrible Tudors

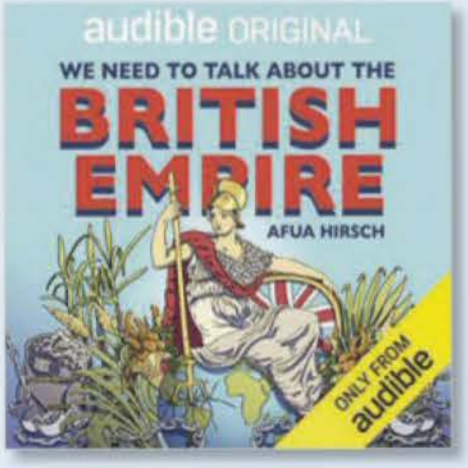
By Terry Deary and Neil Tonge (narrated by Terry Deary)
Scholastic UK, £9.99, runtime 56 minutes

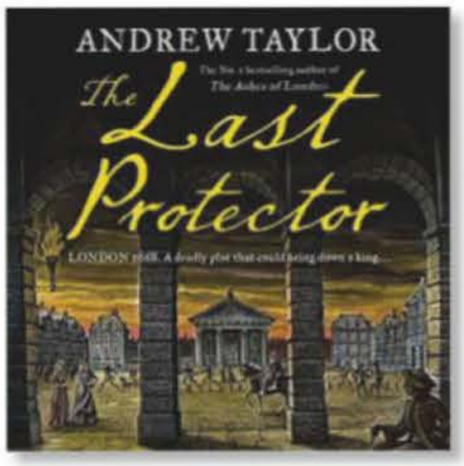
Whether you've been affected by the ongoing school closures or are simply looking for a bit of light hearted historical fun, you could do far worse than the perennially popular Horrible Histories series. This instalment focuses on the Tudors, with plenty of the (innocuous) bawdy humour and bodily grossness that you'd expect. Narrated by creator Terry Deary, there are plenty of sound effects and dramatic interludes to keep things fresh. Audiobooks of other Horrible Histories volumes are also available, including the Groovy Greeks and the Vile Victorians.

We Need to Talk About the British Empire

By Afua Hirsch (narrated by Afua Hirsch)
Audible Original, £19.99, runtime 3 hours and 45 minutes

Afua Hirsch is very good at mapping how the past affects the present: you may have recently seen her debating the presence of controversial historical statues in towns and cities. Here, she talks to a diverse mix of writers, historians and broadcasters, including Anita Rani and Benjamin Zephaniah, about how the British Empire shaped families and continues to shape the nation today. It's timely, topical stuff.





The Last Protector

By Andrew Taylor (narrated by Leighton Pugh)
HarperCollins, £12.99, runtime 12 hours and 14 minutes

Following previous instalments set in the Great Fire of London and the court of Charles II, in *The Last Protector,* Andrew Taylor's series of historical mysteries reaches 1668. Charles' extravagance is causing concern, and rumours swirl of a plot to bring him down. Government agent James Marwood and his friend Cat Lovett are soon caught up in the intrigue, with danger and the very real threat of death never far away. Combining intrigue with great period atmosphere, this is evocative, gripping historical fiction at its finest.

HistoryExtra Podcast

Each month we bring you three of our favourite interviews from the HistoryExtra podcast archives...

THIS MONTH... three podcasts on racism and civil rights

Visit historyextra.com/podcast for four new podcasts every week

HistoryExtra Podcast

Everything You Wanted to Know about the Civil Rights Movement, but Were Afraid to Ask

https://bit.ly/2UX37w2

The American Civil Rights movement has made headlines recently, as global protests took place following George Floyd's death. In this episode, recorded in June, University of Virginia professor Kevin Gaines explores some of the most commonly asked questions about civil rights, from slavery to Rosa Parks.

history extra podcast

Why black hair matters

https://bit.ly/30S8tMG

What at first glance might appear a niche take on the black experience the image of, and reactions to, Afro hair is in fact woven into wider themes of racism, colonialism and slavery. Taking us from the prominence that hair assumed in the visual language of African societies, to capitalist attitudes towards natural Afro hair, author and broadcaster Emma Dabiri is great company in this August 2019 episode, which explores how history manifests itself in the lives and bodies of people in the 21st century.

History Extra Podcast

Confronting Evils

https://bit.ly/2YcSORN

This fascinating, in depth interview with philosopher and cultural commentator Susan Neiman, recorded earlier this year, explores how nations with traumatic histories in this case, racism in the American South, and Nazism in Germany can confront those pasts. The extent to which those two countries have meaningfully grappled with such divisive legacies, and the repercussions of doing (or not doing) so, make for compelling, thought-provoking listening.

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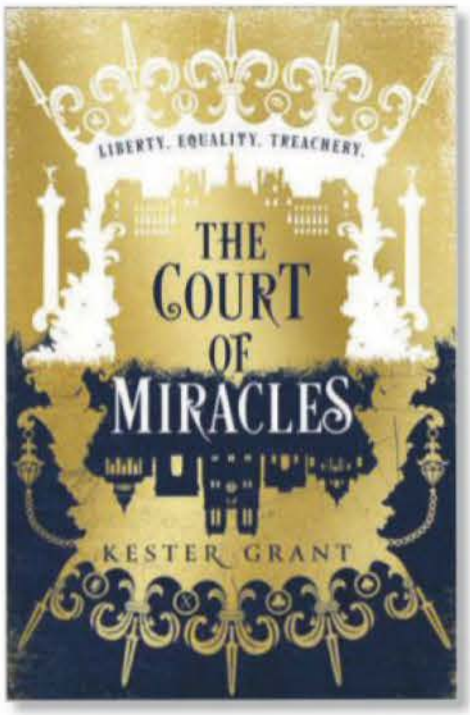
HISTORICAL FICTION



The Court of Miracles

By Kester Grant
HarperCollins, £12.99, hardback, 464 pages

In the violent urban jungle of an alternate 1828 Paris, the French Revolution has failed, and the city is divided between merciless royalty and nine underworld criminal guilds, known as the Court of Miracles. Eponine Thénardier is a talented cat burglar and member of the Thieves Guild. Her life is midnight robberies, avoiding her father's fists, and watching over her naïve adopted sister, Cosette. When Cosette attracts the eye of the Tiger the ruthless lord of the Guild of Flesh Eponine is caught in a desperate race to keep the younger girl safe. Her vow takes her from the city's dark underbelly to the glittering court of Louis XVII.

•••• Excerpt ••••

In which Azelma, another daughter of Thénardier, is sold into the Guild of Flesh

I hear the honeyed but unsteady tones of my very hung-over father from the top of the stairs, the uncertainty in his voice. "Lord Kaplan?"

The visitor has entered, while in the darkness of the kitchen, Femi inches us toward the back door as quietly as possible.

"Forgive me," my father continues. "I did not think you would see to this trifling matter yourself."

"A trifling matter, Master of Beasts?" the voice growls back, seeming to rattle the very roof of the inn. "Do you forget who I am? Do you forget how I came to be? I wanted to see if you would actually do it – if even a man like you would truly sell his own kin."

Sell his own kin? Understanding strikes me like a fist, leaving me winded.

Azelma . . . Father is going to sell Azelma?

"I've twelve gold coins here, Thénardier."

"Twelve..." Father echoes, but his voice is considering, wheedling. A rage wells in me because I know that tone: he's doing what he always does. He's actually bargaining, this time for a better price for his own daughter.

I bite down on Femi's hand, but he doesn't loosen his grip, and with a last fumble at the door, he drags me out into the night.

Q&A
Kester Grant

Kester (Kit) Grant is a British-Mauritian writer of colour who has lived all over the world. She has worked as a copywriter and a volunteer writing mentor for the Ministry of Stories, a UK nonprofit based on Dave Eggers's 826 National. *The Court of Miracles* is the first book in her new trilogy.

What inspired you to take the characters of Eponine and Cosette from Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and give them a story of their own?
I've always believed that Eponine deserved more. Hugo draws a fascinating character – a spoilt young girl who falls on hard times. The daughter of criminals who is brave enough to stand up to a violently abusive father (Thénardier). A burglar who taught herself how to read and write in an era where neither was a given. A resourceful young woman who dies for the emotional advancement of a far less interesting young man. From the moment I first read Eponine's death, I felt it was somehow wrong.

In *Les Misérables*, neither Eponine nor Cosette are masters of their own destinies – is this still the case in *The Court of Miracles*?
The Court of Miracles is the story of how Eponine extracts both herself and her sister(s) from the abusive control of Thénardier, and the fearful grip of a terrifying human trafficker called the Tiger, Lord of the Guild of Flesh. It's the story of how they stand together as women united against the forces of those that would control, undermine their friendship, and subjugate them, in an era where women's fates tended to be rather grim.

What do you think alternate history – such as your book – can offer to historians and non-historians?
Alternate history is fascinating! When we look back, it's laughable to see how close we've come to living in a vastly different world than our own. What if Genghis Khan and his sons hadn't died when they did? What if Hitler had kept good relations with Russia? We so easily forget that there was a time when things could have gone either way, and how profoundly different history might have been.

How did you research the book?
I live on a tiny island in the middle of the Indian Ocean, so the majority of research is, by necessity, done online. I started off by sketching a basic timeline of Parisian history from the lead-up to the French Revolution to the fall of Napoleon. I also read biographies of the main players, taking notes which acted as chapter headers before deep-diving into more detailed sources. I allowed myself to fall down a rabbit hole of anything related to the period, often finding kernels of detail that could enrich the authenticity of the world I was creating.

BENEDICT G. FERNANDES

LETTERS

Crowds celebrate VE Day on 8 May 1945. This year is the 75th anniversary of both VE and VJ Day

British Forces In Korea. Britain was one of many UN countries which sent troops to fight in the Korean War

BRITISH BRAVERY

I enjoyed your recent piece on the Korean War, but it gave the impression that the only action there was by the Americans! You made no reference to the British troops who fought. I was doing my National Service at the time and we went from basic training in Catterick to our tank regiment in Germany, and then we were posted to Korea to join the fighting.

John Hughes, Liverpool

Editor says: Thank you for your letter, John. You're absolutely right to point out that the conflict in Korea was far more than just a war fought between the US, South and North Korea. More than 90,000 Britons fought in Korea – at sea, in the air and on land – including a large number of National Service conscripts. They served alongside combatants from many other nations, including Australia, Canada, South Africa, France, New Zealand, Ethiopia and Thailand.

THE SHADOW OF WAR

My first job in the East was to commission a machine in South Korea, in 1986. There, I found a country still in fear of invasion from North Korea. As I was taken to work I passed a road junction where an armed soldier stood. I was told: "It is for the North, they may come at any time". On another occasion, whilst in the factory, there was a big bang and I was told: "It is only a fighter going supersonic; it is for the North, they may come at any time."

At the weekend I was able to go to Seoul on the underground; there were shopping malls under the streets with big steel doors at both ends so that they could be used as air raid shelters. I was told that in the monthly civil defence practice, the air raid sirens would sound and people on the streets had to go down to these underground places and the steel doors would be shut.

John Grove, Derbyshire

WITCH'S TEXTBOOK...?

I enjoyed the article on the Voynich Manuscript (May 2020). Having also seen the film about it, I am convinced that it is probably a witch's grimoire. These were medieval diaries of spells, herbal potions, folk remedies and magical incantations, often written in a language that only the diarist would be able to decipher lest it fall into the wrong hands. If that is truly the case, its secrets have died with its maker.

Laurette Koserowski, New Jersey

... OR SECRET DIARY?

I'd like to add another theory as to the identity of the author of the Voynich Manuscript. Many of the strange creatures depicted in the manuscript appear to be one celled organisms, tiny invertebrates and very small sea creatures. From their simplicity, it seems to me that any microscope used to observe them was primitive, while the author could well be juvenile most likely female, since inquisitive female minds had lots of time on their hands. The first microscopes have their origins in the 17th century Netherlands and so the language of the book could well be a local conglomeration of French, Dutch and Belgian.

My hunch is that the manuscript was written by a brilliant young woman who was denied the classical education received by her brothers, and who devised her own language and recorded her observations on these tiny flora, fauna, seeds, snowflakes and bits of dirt. Many of the other drawings not related to plant and animal life seem to be indicative of the cultural surroundings of a teenager – perfume bottles, astrological icons.

Perhaps this young woman created and elaborated on the only world she was allowed to witness, and previous scholars are making too much of this text.

Judy Montague, by email

VJ CELEBRATIONS

Recently we have seen on TV old films of VE Day 1945, with all the celebrations in Central London and around Buckingham Palace. A wonderful collection for posterity, especially as the television service had been suspended during World War II. I was in secondary school in Edinburgh during the war and had to use the shelters while Glasgow was under attack; my Dad remembered watching the planes flying over the Forth in brilliant moonlight on their way to the Clydebank ship yards – and on their way back to Germany.

March 1945 was an important time for me; I had sat a series of exams, which had all to be passed in order to be awarded the Scottish Leaving Certificate – this would allow me to apply for university or college (I passed!). In early May, with news of the end of fighting trickling through, we were given two days holiday to celebrate VE

The Voynich Manuscript has inspired many theories over the centuries

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Day. Where I lived, celebrations were quiet, but I learned much later of street parties in other parts of Edinburgh.

However, a later occasion has remained in my memory – in August of that year. My parents decided to have a family holiday in Aberdeen, and we crossed the Forth for the first time for six years. Late one evening the landlady told us that the Prime Minister would be broadcasting to the nation; we gathered round the wireless and heard Clement Attlee, about three weeks into his premiership, announce the end of the war in the Far East. VJ Day had begun! We went out and wandered around central Aberdeen, watching the celebrating populace. That occasion has remained in my memory ever since.

I hope that the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, on 15 August, will be commemorated as much as VE Day.

Douglas N Currie, Edinburgh

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The lucky winners of the crossword from issue 81 are:

R Beckett, London
T Herbert, Leicestershire
M Tucker, Wiltshire

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Please note, there will be a delay in posting your prize due to the current coronavirus crisis.

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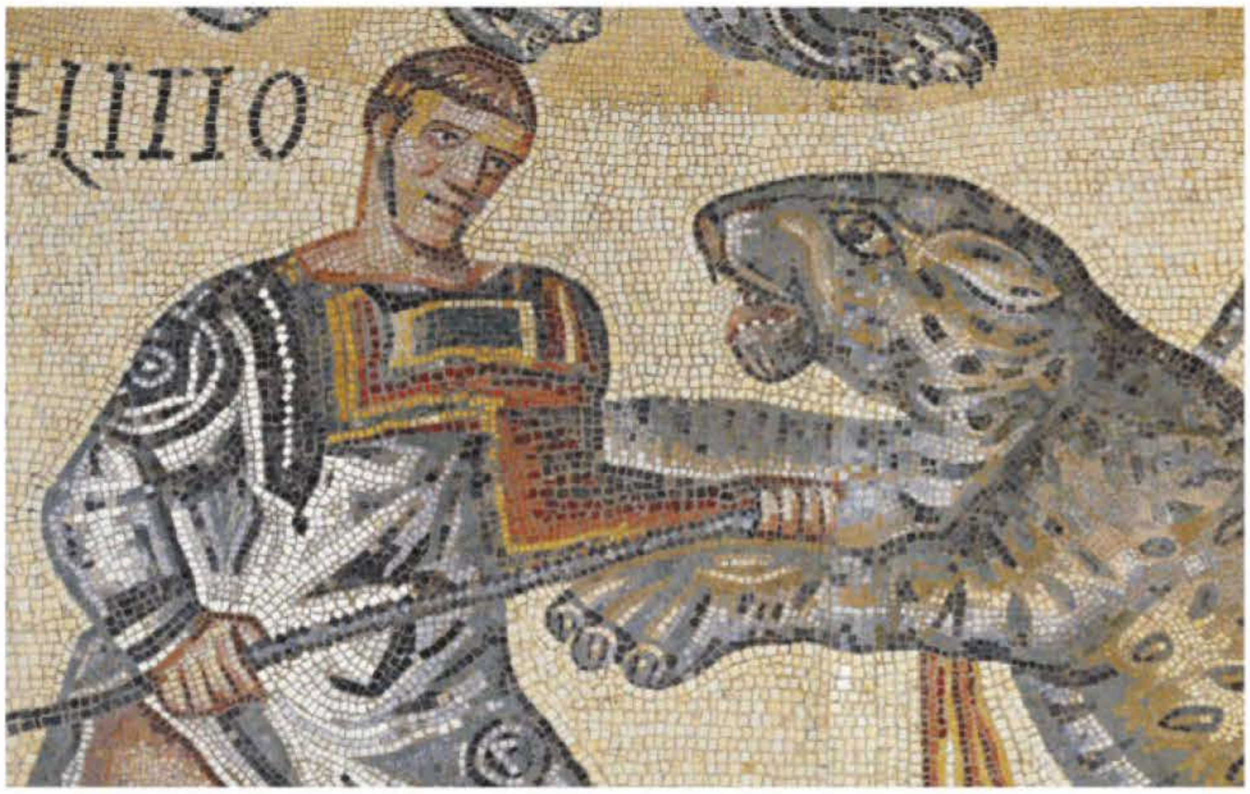

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BBC HISTORY REVEALED

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EDITORIAL
Editor Charlotte Hodgman
charlotte.hodgman@immediate.co.uk
Production Editor Kev Lochun
Staff Writer Emma Slattery Williams
Digital Editor Emma Mason
emma.mason@immediate.co.uk
Deputy Digital Editor Elinor Evans
Digital Editorial Assistant
Rachel Dinning

ART
Art Editor Sheu-Kuei Ho
Picture Editor Rosie McPherson

CONTRIBUTORS & EXPERTS
Rob Blackmore, Rhiannon Davies, Matt Elton, Kester Grant, Harriet Heaton, Marc Morris, Gavin Mortimer, Gordon O'Sullivan, Katherine Mitchell, Adam Smith, Richard Smyth, Nige Tassell, Jonny Wilkes, Tana Wojczuk, Jonathan Wright

PRESS & PR
Communications Manager
Emma Cooney 0117 300 8507
emma.cooney@immediate.co.uk

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager John Lawton

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Advertisement Manager
Sam Jones 0117 314 8847
sam.jones@immediate.co.uk
Subscriptions Director
Jacky Perales-Morris
Subscriptions Marketing Manager
Natalie Lawrence

PRODUCTION
Production Director Sarah Powell
Production Co-ordinator
Emily Mounter
Ad Co-ordinator Florence Lott
Ad Designer Julia Young
Reprographics
Tony Hunt, Chris Sutch

PUBLISHING
Content director David Musgrove
Commercial director Jemima Dixon
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Andy Marshall
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BBC STUDIOS, UK PUBLISHING
Chair, Editorial Review Boards
Nicholas Brett
Managing Director of Consumer Products and Licensing Stephen Davies

Head of Publishing Mandy Thwaites
Compliance Manager
Cameron McEwan
UK Publishing Coordinator
Eva Abramik uk.publishing@bbc.com

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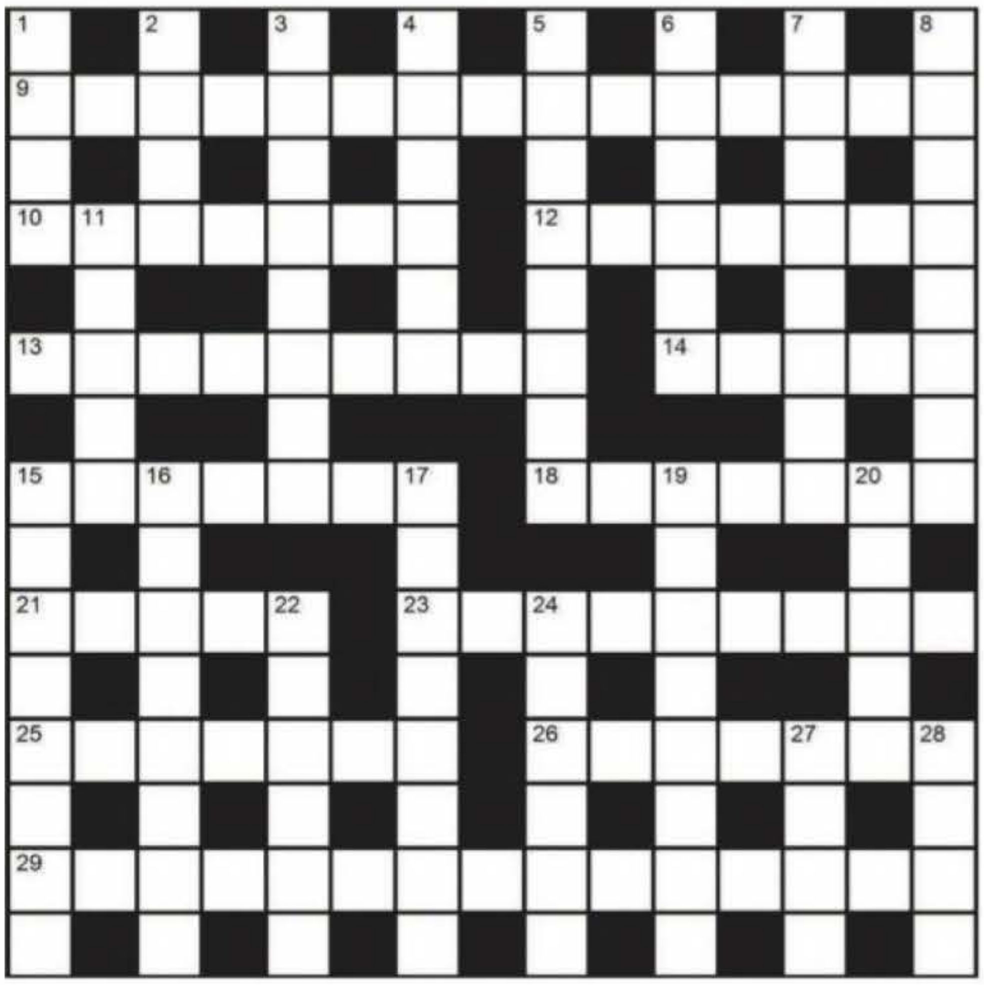

Set by Richard Smyth

ACROSS

9 1956 realist play by John Osborne (4,4,2,5)

10 1973 crime film starring Al Pacino (7)

12 17th-century radical sect led by Gerrard Winstanley (7)

13 Italian Renaissance sculptor (d1466) (9)

14 Robert ___ (1974-1963), US poet (5)

15 ___ *at Asnières*, 1884 painting by Georges-Pierre Seurat (7)

18 French dance, popular in the 18th century (7)

21/22 Era in French history from 1871 to 1914, supposedly characterised by peace and prosperity (5,6)

23 Cleaving weapon, widespread in the Middle Ages (6-3)

25 Geoffrey ___ (b.1940), Yorkshire and England batsman (7)

26 In the arts, a commitment to truthful, lifelike depiction (7)

29 Charles Dickens novel of 1865 (3,6,6)

DOWN

1 Mountain range crossed by the Carthaginian army in 218 BC (4)

2 See 6 down

3 Potent beverage formerly known as the 'green fairy' (8)

4 Sophie ___ (1921–43), anti-Nazi activist (6)

5 1993 novel by Sebastian Faulks, set during World War I (8)

6/2 Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen (or Rodgers, Williams, Jenkins and Owen) (4,2,4)

7 Historic market town of western Cumbria (8)

8 Historical term for a working-class French woman (8)

11 Viral fever, identified in 1976 and named after an African river (5)

15 Upsurge in the birth rate, as occurred in the mid-20th century (4,4)

16 Courtyard for jousting (8)

17 1942 Alfred Hitchcock thriller (8)

19 Pen-name of the writer and philosopher François-Marie Arouet (1694–1778) (8)

20 US state, a sovereign nation from 1835 to 1846 (5)

22 See 21 Across

24 Hester ___ (1741–1821), diarist and writer (6)

27 Burl ___ (1909–95), actor and singer (4)

28 Narendra ___ (b1950), Prime Minister of India since 2014 (4)

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Kasia Boddy

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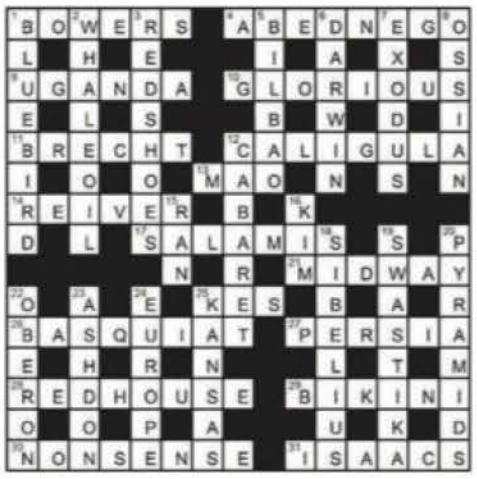

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TRUE OR FALSE

Have you been paying attention? The answers to the following statements can all be found in this issue of *BBC History Revealed*...

A On 28 September 1066 William the Conqueror landed his forces at Folkestone

B The stone foot of the giant Cormoran lies on St Michael Mount's causeway

C Gertrude Ederle swam across the Channel in 14 hours and 39 minutes

D In 1533 Martin Luther published his German translation of the Bible

E President Andrew Johnson was impeached and came within one vote of conviction

HISTORY WORD SEARCH

Find the ten words connected to...

THE BRONTËS

D	R	M	X	R	P	R	S	L	M	F	F	I	C	M	L	A
D	B	D	C	H	D	E	L	K	D	T	D	U	V	X	L	C
E	J	S	R	N	L	R	L	F	N	D	U	Z	O	I	A	T
N	R	P	A	R	E	R	Z	Q	A	M	L	U	A	Y	H	O
I	E	I	E	T	E	U	T	I	D	L	H	L	O	S	L	N
O	G	A	H	G	T	C	P	N	E	X	B	D	T	N	L	M
F	F	G	O	S	O	R	I	B	Y	C	A	S	R	U	E	L
G	B	N	E	E	K	N	F	W	A	N	J	E	U	P	F	L
B	T	E	E	L	Y	R	D	U	V	N	C	R	C	J	D	E
P	F	M	E	P	B	O	O	A	S	I	L	L	E	W	L	W
E	I	C	G	O	E	V	X	Y	L	L	E	Y	C	I	I	N
C	R	I	E	M	O	O	D	J	H	M	U	I	B	C	W	A
I	U	T	P	I	I	C	U	N	G	R	E	Y	J	N	F	R
S	T	H	G	I	E	H	G	N	I	R	E	H	T	U	W	B
S	P	R	T	N	J	F	H	A	W	O	R	T	H	J	F	U
U	C	K	I	P	E	Y	O	M	B	U	P	P	S	V	T	U

Wildfell Hall
Branwell
Yorkshire
Wuthering Heights
Currer
Gondal
Haworth
Bell
Acton
Ellis

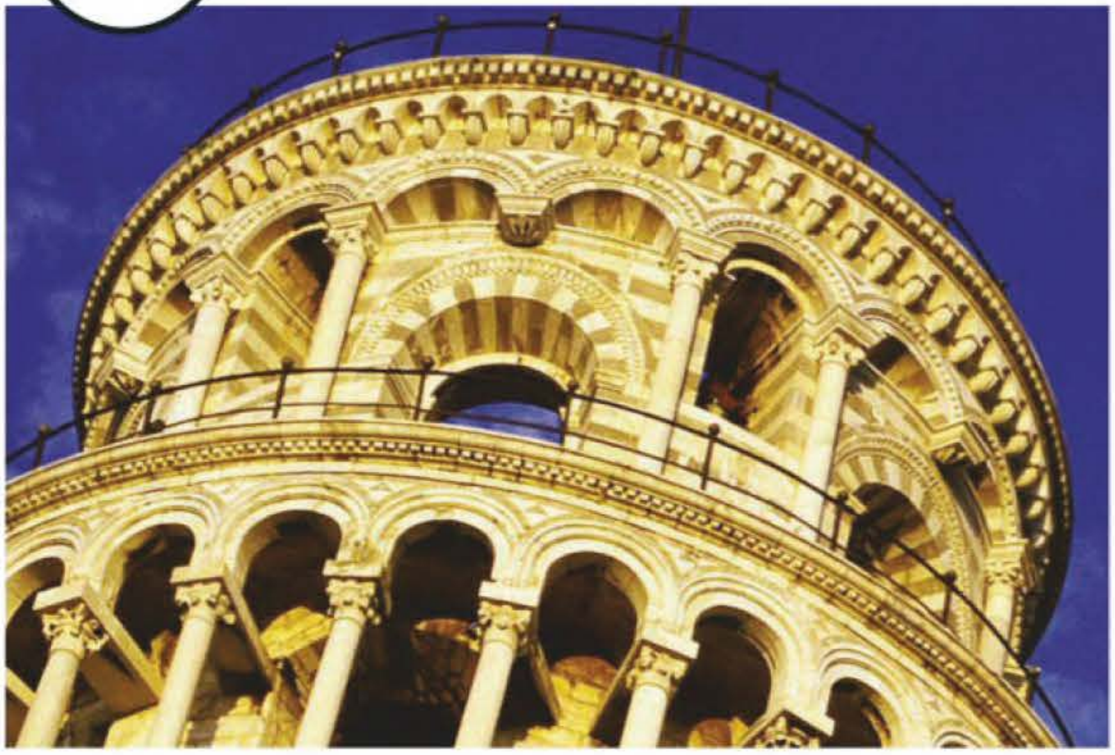
ANAGRAM

Immortal army

aristocrat
rat rower

PICTURE ROUND

What is this famous landmark?



ANSWERS BELOW

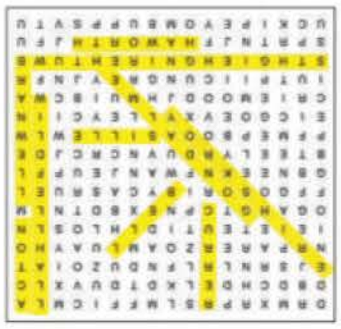
ANSWERS

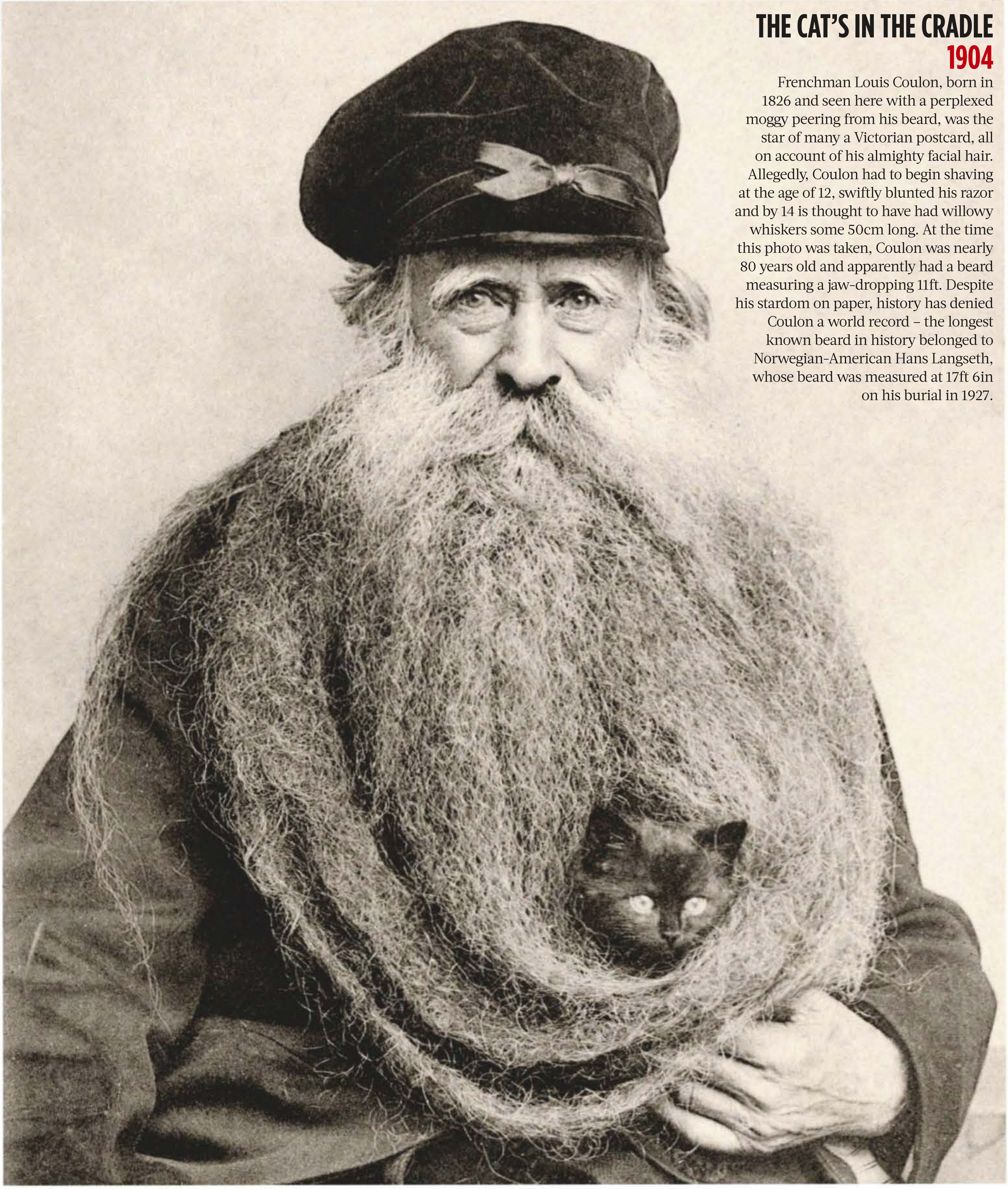
True or False: A) False (see p32) **B)** False (see p80) **C)** True (see p58) **D)** False (see p39) **E)** True (see p68)

Anagram: Terracotta Warriors

Picture Round: Leaning Tower of Pisa

History Word Search:





THE CAT'S IN THE CRADLE

1904

Frenchman Louis Coulon, born in 1826 and seen here with a perplexed moggy peering from his beard, was the star of many a Victorian postcard, all on account of his almighty facial hair. Allegedly, Coulon had to begin shaving at the age of 12, swiftly blunted his razor and by 14 is thought to have had willowy whiskers some 50cm long. At the time this photo was taken, Coulon was nearly 80 years old and apparently had a beard measuring a jaw-dropping 11ft. Despite his stardom on paper, history has denied Coulon a world record – the longest known beard in history belonged to Norwegian-American Hans Langseth, whose beard was measured at 17ft 6in on his burial in 1927.

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